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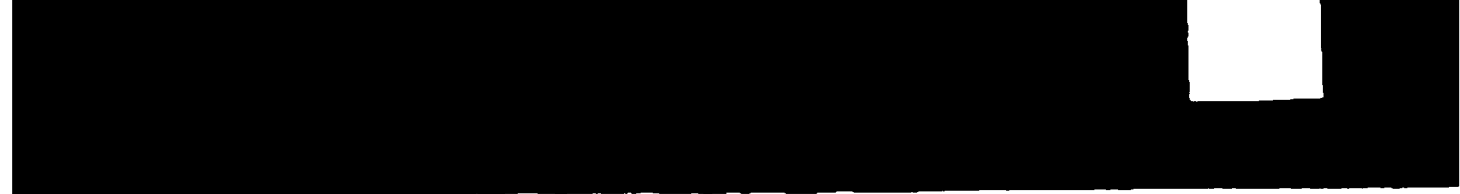
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A COMMENTARY
ON THE
EPISTLES AND GOSPELS.



A COMMENTARY

ON THE

**EPISTLES AND GOSPELS IN THE BOOK
OF COMMON PRAYER,**

EXTRACTED FROM

**Writings of the Fathers of the Holy Catholic
Church, Anterior to the Division of
the East and West,**

BY A LAY MEMBER OF THE CHURCH;

**WITH AN INTRODUCTORY NOTICE BY THE
DEAN OF ST. PAUL'S.**

In Four Parts.

PART I. ADVENT TO QUINQUAGESIMA.

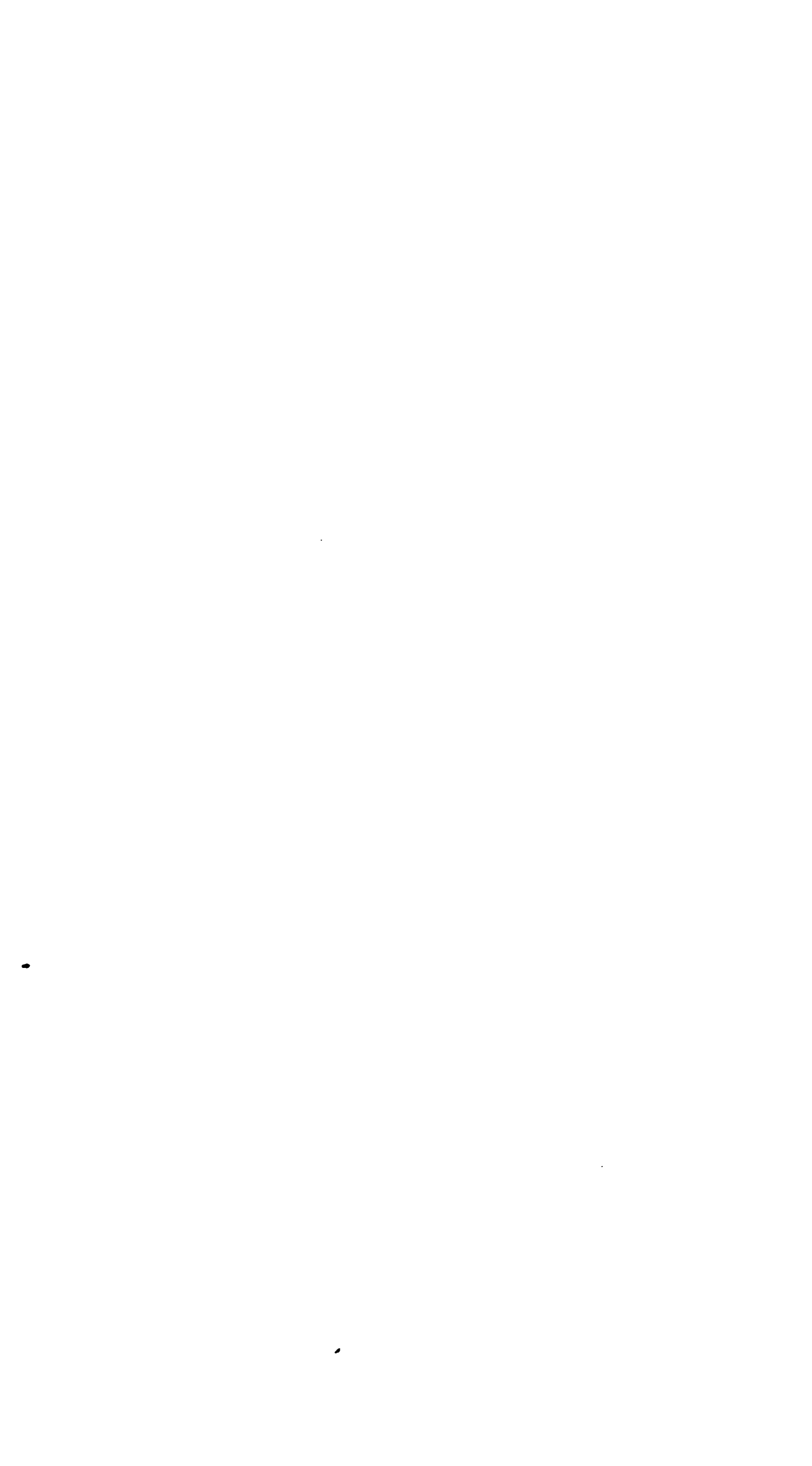


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PREFACE.

THE following Commentary on the Epistles and Gospels, is compiled from the writings of those ancient Fathers of the Holy Catholic Church, who, living before her division into East and West, and before the introduction of new and distinctive doctrines, unknown in Apostolic times, spake with one mind and with one voice those truths, which we acknowledge as the basis of the Creeds and Liturgy of our own Branch of that Ancient and Universal Church.

The work is chiefly taken from the Oxford Translations known as the "Library of Fathers."

The plan has been, where it was practicable, to form a commentary on each Epistle and Gospel, by mere abridgment of the homily or homilies of one Father upon that portion of Scripture. In such cases the name of the writer is placed at the end, without further reference.

In other cases, commentaries have been gathered from various writers, or from various works of one writer, and references are then given: but no attempt has been made to dovetail passages taken from various writers.

The Catena of St. Thomas Aquinas, (Oxford Translation,) has also been used, and a few quotations have

been drawn from other sources, always under the same restrictions as to the date of the Fathers quoted. The work whence such passages are taken is referred to in the notes.

In a few instances, where no commentary, or none suitable to the work, could be found among the writings in the "Library of Fathers," passages have been chosen bearing on the subject of an Epistle or Gospel, instead of forming a commentary on its words; or else bearing on the subject especially belonging to the day. Parts of Holy Scripture, (as from the Old Testament, or Book of Revelation,) appointed in the place of an Epistle or Gospel, have been treated in this way when it was practicable; when it was not, they have been left without commentary.

The extracts have not always been taken verbatim from the translations; the work of cutting out necessarily involving some verbal changes, and others having been made when greater clearness could be obtained by a slight alteration in the words, or in the construction of a sentence.

The compiler would fain draw the attention of the reader to two or three points. First, to the reverence due to those who were teachers in the Primitive Church, which in her unity possessed a safeguard for her doctrine.

Secondly, to "the advantage which some of the Fathers (e.g. St. Chrysostom,) possessed as commentators on the New Testament, from speaking its language," a point of especial value in relation to the criticism of the present day; and, Thirdly, to the perfect applicability of their practical inferences and ad-

monitions to us, who, living in another age, have almost learned to think of ourselves as living in another world ; and to forget, in our reverence for the Saints and Martyrs of ages past, that we are called by the same calling, that their duties are our duties, and that because our life is easier than was theirs, it is not therefore to be governed by another or a lower rule.

All Saints' Day, 1873.

INTRODUCTORY NOTICE.

THE general plan of the present work is sufficiently explained in the preface. It only remains to say a few words about its distinctive character as a Commentary, and as an illustrative companion to the Prayer-book.

1. To the English reader not familiar with the early Christian literature, it presents itself as a sort of introduction to the ancient mode of commenting on Holy Scripture. The extracts range over the whole field of what are called the writings of the Fathers of the undivided Church; but it will be found that the passages selected are mostly taken from St. Chrysostom, as representing the Eastern Church, and St. Augustine, as representing the Western. And these two writers unquestionably occupy the first rank among the early expounders of Scripture. They exhibit all that is most characteristic and remarkable in the primitive manner of understanding and applying Scripture, whether to the elucidation of doctrine, the practical lessons of life, or the satisfaction and guidance of the religious affections, and the religious imagination: and they do this with a richness of expression, a versatility and keenness of thought, and a fire and force of earnest conviction, which place them far above all other writers of the same period, in the special province of Scriptural exposition. To all the more recent modes of such exposition, whether in the middle ages, or in

more modern times, they present a contrast which must strike every reader. It is the contrast between an analytical examination of the language and arguments of Scripture from the outside, and the outpouring of mind and thoughts which have been animated, informed and kindled by the substance, the purpose and the spirit of the sacred books. There is in these writers a kind of living contact of their whole being with the inspired words, which is almost peculiar to their age of the Church; they seem instinctively and without effort, to regard passages of Scripture as we do the language which meets us with power and interest, from real and present life. Their whole soul is stirred and penetrated with words which to them are manifestly full of the things and the spirit of God; their reading leaves them aflame with the enthusiasm of admiration, delight, awe, hope,—analogous, in a higher degree, to the feeling which a glorious prospect, or a magnificent passage of poetry or oratory leaves on the mind which takes in, and is alive to its complete meaning and effect. This is the secret of their excellence and value as commentators. There was no doubt much to learn about the meaning and structure of Scripture, which they were not qualified to teach us, and for which we are indebted to the subtlety, the patient criticism, and accurate industry of later times. But the school of the Fathers, especially such Fathers as Chrysostom and Augustine, is the school in which we shall best learn to appreciate the living tone, the ineffable height, and the divine and awful mystery and richness of the Bible; and after we have tried to understand it, as we ought to try

to understand it,—accurately, soberly, and with sound judgment, to go on to bring, not merely our intellect, but our whole soul and being, within the influence of the unique and overpowering disclosure of truth which fills it, and which was revealed to bring us in adoration before Him who is there shewn to us, and to purify our hearts and exalt and ennoble our thoughts, after the measure of that heavenly state, the greatness and holiness of which the Bible reflects to us.

2. To this ancient mode of reading and thinking of Scripture, the extracts in this volume introduce us. But they further do this in a way, which, it is hoped, will be acceptable to those to whom the Prayer-book supplies a guide and method of arrangement for their religious reading. No better order can be devised than that which the English Church has inherited from very ancient times, and shares with the whole of the Western Church, for a systematic and periodical review of the great outlines of Christian truth and history, in connection with the light which is thrown on them by Scripture, and by nothing else as by Scripture. The selection of the Epistles and Gospels for the Christian year, forms a subject of study which contributes as much as anything to the fulness and to the harmony and perfection of Church teaching. Many collateral modes of illustration may be brought to bear on this ancient and most instructive combination of Scripture with the times and seasons of the year, as it passes over the Christian life. It has been thought that it would supply matter of interest and instruction to many, if an attempt was made to bring to bear on the familiar subjects of the Christian year,

some choice examples of the way in which these subjects were treated by the great Fathers of the Christian Church. With this purpose, and in the hope of bringing something of fresh use from the ancient treasure of the Church, the present work was undertaken. The design of it is, as far as English readers are concerned, one not yet undertaken. It will, I think, be seen by those who use the book, how much patience, industry and care, have been bestowed on the preparation of it and with what sobriety and good judgment the extracts forming the compilation have been selected.

R. W. C.

TO THE READER.

[IN THE WORDS OF ST. CHRYSOSTOM.]

Hom. xi. on St. John.

I DESIRE to ask one favour of you all before I touch on the words of the Gospel; do not you refuse my request, for I ask nothing heavy or burdensome; nor, if granted, will it be useful only to me who receive, but also to you who grant it, and perhaps far more to you than to me. What, then, is it that I require of you? That each of you take in hand that section of the Gospels which is to be read among you on the first day of the week, and before the day arrive, that he sit down at home and read it through, and often carefully consider its contents, and examine all its parts well, noting what is clear, what obscure, what seems to make for the adversaries, but does not really so; and when you have tried, in a word, every point, so come to hear it read. For from zeal like this will be no small gain both to you and to us; we shall not need much labour to render clear the meaning of what is said, because your minds will be already made familiar with the sense of the words; and you will become keener and more clear-sighted, not for hearing only, nor for learning, but also for the teaching of others. As it is at present, most of those who come hither are compelled to take in the whole at

once, both the words of the Gospel and the remarks we make upon them; wherefore they will not, though we should go on teaching for a whole year, reap any great gain. How can they, when they have leisure only as a byeword to attend to what is said, and only in this place, and for this short time? If any lay the fault on business, and cares, and constant occupation, in public and private matters;—in the first place, this is in itself no slight charge against them, that they are surrounded with such a multitude of affairs, are so continually nailed to the things of this life, that they cannot find even a little leisure for what is more needful than all. Besides, that this is a mere pretext and excuse, their meeting with friends would prove against them, their loitering in the theatres, and the parties they make to see horse-races, at which they often spend whole days, yet never in that case does any one of them complain of the pressure of business. For trifles, then, you can always find abundant leisure, but when you ought to attend to the things of God, you begin to make excuses.

Do these, then, seem to you so utterly mean and superfluous, that you think you need not assign even a little leisure to them?

THE FIRST SUNDAY IN ADVENT.

THE EPISTLE.

ROMANS xiii. 8—14.

“Owe no man any thing, but to love one another,” &c.

Owe no man any thing, but to love one another: for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law.

The beginning and the end of Christian virtue is Love. This it has for its root, this for its growth, this for its perfection. Observe how Love hath both parts of virtue,—abstinence from evil, for it *worketh no ill*, and practice of good, for it is *the fulfilling of the law*. Let us, then, love one another, for then we shall be beloved of God. Let us be persuaded of His love, and delight ourselves in it: for thus, even in this world, we shall behold His kingdom; we shall be living the life of angels while we abide on earth; we shall be in as happy a condition as they that dwell in heaven; and after our departure hence we shall stand, the brightest of beings, before the judgment-seat of Christ, and shall enjoy that glory unutterable, which may we all attain unto by the grace and love toward man of our Lord Jesus Christ.

St. Paul having given to the Romans such commands as were fitting, he urges them on to the performance of good works, in consideration of that which was so quickly advancing upon them: for the time of judgment, he means, is at the door. So also he wrote to the Corinthians, “The time is short.” And again to the Hebrews, “For yet a little while and He that

* 1 Cor. vii. 29.

shall come will come, and will not tarry^b.” But in these cases it was to cheer such as were in trouble, and to solace them under the toils of their successive trials, that he said these things; while in the passage before us he does it to rouse those that are asleep, this language being suitable for both purposes. What then means, *Now it is high time to awake out of sleep?* It means that near is the Resurrection, near the awful Judgment, near the day that burneth as a furnace. Henceforward we must shake off our listlessness, “For now is our salvation nearer than when we believed.” You see how he puts the Resurrection now close by them; for as the time advances, he means, the season of our present life is wasting away, and that of the life to come draws nearer. If, then, thou be prepared, and hast done all whatsoever He hath commanded, that day will be a day of salvation to thee; but not so if thou be unprepared.

Then, since it was not unlikely that in the beginning of their early endeavours they would be most in earnest, in that their desire was then in its full vigour, but that as time went on their earnestness would waste away to nothing,—he says that the reverse should come to pass, that they ought not to become relaxed as time went on, but to be the more full of vigour. For the nearer the King may be at hand, the more ought they to get themselves in readiness to receive Him: the nearer the prize, the more vigorous ought they to be in the contest. Thus do those who strive in the races,—when they are near the end of the course, and the receiving of the prize is at hand, then they rouse themselves up to greater exertion. For this reason he said, *Now is our salvation nearer than when we believed.*

The night is far spent, the day is at hand. Let us henceforth do what belongs to the day, not to the night. For this is what is done in the things of

^b Heb. x. 37.

this life: when we see the night receding before the morning, and hear the swallow twittering, we each of us awake our neighbour, though it be night still. But so soon as the darkness is gone, we hasten one another, and say, It is now day! and we set about the works of the day, dressing and leaving our dreams, and thoroughly shaking off our sleep that the day may find us ready, and we may not have to begin getting up and stretching ourselves, when the light is come. What, then, we do in the one case, let us do in the other. Let us put off vain imaginings, let us get clear of the dreams of this life present, let us lay aside its deep slumber, and be clad in virtue for a garment.

Let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light. Yes, for the day is calling us to battle array, and to the fight. Yet, fear not at hearing of array and arms. In the case of a suit of earthly armour, to put it on is a heavy and abhorred task, but this armour is to be desired and prayed for. For it is of light that these arms are. Hence they will set thee forth brighter than the sunbeam, and giving out a great shining; they place thee in security, for they are arms; and glittering do they make thee, for they are arms of light. And as the bridegroom goes forth with joyous looks from his chamber, so does he who is defended with these arms, for he is at once soldier and bridegroom.

Further, that you may form a clearer notion of what is meant by making *provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof*, and may shun such a provision, just call to mind the drunken, the gluttonous, those that pride themselves on dress, those that are effeminate, those that live a soft and relaxed life, and you will see what is here meant. St. Paul does not forbid drinking, but drinking to excess; so, too, he does not forbid making provision for the flesh, but doing it with a view to "fulfil the lusts thereof," by going beyond what is necessary. Do thou who hast

put on Christ cast away all those things, and seek for no more than to have thy flesh in health? To this degree make provision for it, and not any further, but spend all thine industry upon spiritual things; for then thou wilt be able to rouse thyself out of sleep, without being weighed down by those manifold desires. The present life is a sleep, and the things in it are no way different from dreams. And as they that are asleep often speak and see things not healthful, so do we also, or rather it is worse with us; for he that doeth or sayeth anything disgraceful in a dream, when he is rid of his sleep is rid of his disgrace, and is not to be punished; but it is not so in what we do waking; the shame and also the punishment of our misdeeds are lasting.

Let us, then, shake off this evil sleep, for if the day find us sleeping, a deathless death will succeed; and before that day we shall be open to the attacks of all our enemies that are of this world, both men and devils, and if they be minded to undo us there is nought to hinder them. Let us then put on Christ, and be with Him continually; for this is putting Him on, never to be without Him, ever to have Him visible in us, through our moderation, through our sanctification. Let, then, Christ be seen in every part of our life. And how is He to be seen in us? By our doing as He did. And what did He? He needed food, and He fed upon barley loaves. He had occasion to travel, and He walked so as even to be weary. His garments were cheap; and often was He alone, with no train after Him. And what He did upon the cross, and what He did amidst insults, in a word all that He did, do thou learn by heart, and imitate. So wilt thou have put on Christ, if thou make "no provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof^c."

^c St. Chrysostom.

THE GOSPEL.

ST. MATTHEW xxi. 1—13.

“When they drew nigh unto Jerusalem,” &c.

When they drew nigh unto Jerusalem, and were come to Bethphage, unto the mount of Olives, then sent Jesus two disciples, saying unto them, Go into the village over against you, and straightway ye shall find an ass tied, and a colt with her : loose them, and bring them unto Me. And if any man say ought unto you, ye shall say, The Lord hath need of them ; and straightway he will send them. All this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, saying, Tell ye the daughter of Sion, Behold, thy King cometh unto thee, meek, and sitting upon an ass, and a colt the foal of an ass.

He had often entered Jerusalem before, but never before with so much circumstance. Why is this? Before was the beginning only of the new Dispensation, and neither was He well known, nor was the time of His Passion near ; wherefore He mixed with the people with less distinction, and more as disguising Himself. Had He so appeared at the first He would not have been held in admiration, and would have aroused greater enmity. But when He had given sufficient proof of his power, and the Cross was now at the door, He makes Himself more conspicuous, and doeth with greater circumstance the things that will excite them. It was indeed possible that this should have been done at the beginning, but it was not profitable nor expedient.

Observe, I pray thee, how many miracles are done, and how many prophecies fulfilled. He said, “Ye shall find an ass ;” He foretold that no man should hinder them, but that all, when they heard, should hold their

peace. And this is no small condemnation of the Jews, that while those, who were not known to Him, He persuaded (and that by His disciples) to give up their property without opposition ; these, who were even present with Him at the working of His miracles, were not induced to yield themselves to Him.

And do not account what was done to be a small thing. For who persuaded them not to forbid it when their own property was taken from them, and that, when they were, perhaps, poor men and husbandmen ? Why, say I, not to forbid it ? Not to question, and even if they questioned, to hold their peace, to give it up. For indeed either way it were marvellous ; whether, when their beasts were dragged away they said nothing, or when, having spoken, and heard "the Lord hath need of them," they yielded and withstood not, though they saw not Him, but His disciples only.

By these things He teaches that it was quite in His power to have hindered the Jews even against their will, when they were about to attack Him, and that He could have rendered them speechless ; but He would not.

And yet another thing doth He teach the disciples, to give whatever He should ask ; and, though He should require them to yield up their very life, to give even this without gainsaying. For if strangers yielded to Him, much more ought they to strip themselves of all for Him.

And besides what we have said, He was fulfilling also another prophecy, one which was twofold,—one part in words, and another in deeds. That in deeds was, by the sitting on the ass ; and that in words, the prediction of Zacharias, because he had said that the king should sit on an ass. And He, having fulfilled it, gave to the prophecy yet another beginning, by what He was then doing typifying things to come.

How, and in what manner ? He proclaimed beforehand the calling of the unclean Gentiles, and that He should rest upon them, and that they should

yield to Him and follow Him. So prophecy succeeded to prophecy ^d.

But mark how tractable the colt, how, being unbroken, and never having known the rein, he was not restive, but went on orderly; which thing was itself a prophecy of the future, signifying the submissiveness of the Gentiles, and their sudden conversion to good order. For all things did that word work, which said, "Loose him, and bring him to Me." So that the unmanageable became orderly, and the unclean thenceforth clean.

Behold, thy King cometh to thee, meek, and riding on an ass, and a colt; not driving in chariots like the rest of the kings, not demanding tribute, not surrounded by guards and thrusting men aside, but in every way displaying His great meekness.

Ask then the Jew, What King came to Jerusalem borne on an ass? He cannot mention one but This alone.

And the disciples went, and did as Jesus commanded them; and brought the ass, and the colt, and put on them their clothes, and they set Him thereon. And a very great multitude spread their garments in the way; others cut down branches from the trees and strawed them in the way.

What shall we deserve, when some clothe the ass on which He was set, and others strew their garments even under her feet, what shall we deserve if we, seeing Him naked ^e, and being not commanded to strip ourselves, but to give of what we have stored up, even so are not liberal? and when they indeed attend upon Him before and behind, we, when He cometh unto us, send Him away, thrust Him from us, and insult Him ^f?

In saying, *the multitudes that went before and that followed*, the Evangelist shews that both people, those

^d The received mystical interpretation of our Lord's final entry into Jerusalem represented the ass as the type of the Jewish converts, and the colt, of the Gentile Church. Note in St. Chrys. on St. Matt., vol. i. p. 111.

^e St. Matt. xxv. 42, 43.

^f St. Chrys. in loc.

who before the Gospel, and those who after the Gospel believed on the Lord, praise Jesus with one harmonious voice of confession ^s.

When they say, *Hosanna to the Son of David ; Blessed is He that cometh in the Name of the Lord*, it is the dispensation of Christ's humanity that they set forth ; but when they say, *Hosanna in the highest*, they proclaim His restoration to the holy places ^h.

And when He was come into Jerusalem, all the city was moved, saying, Who is This ? and the multitude said, This is Jesus the prophet of Nazareth of Galilee.

See the meanness of the Jews ! He had wrought so many miracles, and never were they thus amazed at Him ; but when they saw a multitude running together, then they marvel ; when they thought they were saying something great, even then were their thoughts earthly, and low, and grovelling ⁱ.

And Jesus went into the temple of God, and cast out all them that sold and bought in the temple, and overthrew the tables of the money-changers, and the seats of them that sold doves, and said unto them, It is written, My house shall be called the house of prayer, but ye have made it a den of thieves.

It is manifest that the Lord did this thing not once, but twice ; the first time is told by John, the second by the other three Evangelists ^k.

And this makes the charge heavier against the Jews, that when He had done this, not once only, but a second time, they persisted in their trafficking, and accused Him of being an adversary of God, when they ought, even from this circumstance, to have learned His honour for His Father, and His own power ^l.

And He cast out all them that sold and bought. It should here be explained that in obedience to the law, in the Temple of the Lord venerated throughout

^s St. Jerome, Cat. Aur.
Hom. in loc.

^h Origen, Cat. Aur.
^k St. Augustine, Cat. Aur.

ⁱ St. Chrys.,
^l St. Chrys., Hom.
in loc.

the whole world, and resorted to by Jews out of every country, innumerable victims were sacrificed, especially on festival days; the rich brought bulls, rams, and goats; the poor, young pigeons and turtle doves, that all alike might offer sacrifice. But it would often happen that those who came from a distance had no victim ready. The priests, therefore, contrived a plan for making a gain out of the people, selling to such as had no victim the animals which they had need of for sacrifice, and themselves receiving them back again as soon as sold. But this fraudulent practice was often defeated by the poverty of the visitors, who, lacking means, had neither victims nor wherewith to purchase them. The priests, therefore, appointed bankers, who might lend to them under a bond; but, because the law forbade usury, and money lent without interest was profitless, besides that sometimes the result was a loss of the principal, they bethought themselves of another scheme. Instead of bankers they appointed *collybistæ*, a word for which the Latin has no equivalent. Sweetmeats and other trifling offerings they called *collyba*, such, for example, as parched pulse, raisins, and apples of diverse sorts. As, then, they could not take usury, they accepted the value in kind, taking things that are bought with money, as if this was not what Ezekiel preached against when he spoke of not "receiving usury nor increase^m." This kind of traffic, or rather fraud, the Lord seeing in His Father's house, and moved thereat with spiritual zeal, cast out of the Temple this great multitude of traders.

Among all the miracles wrought by our Lord, this seems to me the most wonderful,—that one Man, and He at that time regarded as so mean that He was afterwards crucified, and even while the Scribes and Pharisees were exasperated against Him, seeing their gains thus cut off, that He was able by the blows of

^m Ezek. xviii. 8, 13, 17.

one scourge to cast out so great a multitude. Surely a flame and starry ray darted from His eye, and the majesty of the Godhead was radiant in His countenanceⁿ.

Mystically, the Temple of God is the Church of Christ, wherein are many who live not, as they ought, spiritually, but carnally; and that temple which is built of living stones, they make by their actions to be a den of thieves.

Among a Christian people, such as spend their time in nothing else but buying and selling, continuing but little in prayers or in good works, these are the buyers and sellers in the Temple of God^o.

He is indeed a thief, and turns the temple of God into a den of thieves, who makes a gain of his religion.

What we have spoken of churches let each man understand of himself, for the apostle says, "Ye are the temple of God." Let not therefore the spirit of bargaining dwell in your breast, nor the desire of gifts; lest Jesus, entering in anger and sternness, should purify His temple not without scourging, that from a den of thieves He may make it a house of prayer^p.

ⁿ St. Jerome, Cat. Aur.

^o Origen, Cat. Aur.

^p St. Jerome, Cat. Aur.

THE SECOND SUNDAY IN ADVENT.

THE EPISTLE.

ROMANS XV. 4—13.

“Whatsoever things were written aforetime,” &c.

Whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope.

That is, that we might not fall away (for there are conflicts within and without), that being nerved and comforted by the Scriptures, we might exhibit patience, that by living in patience we might abide in hope. For these are productive of each other, patience of hope, and hope of patience, and both of them are brought about by the Scriptures.

Now the God of patience and consolation grant you to be likeminded one towards another, according to Christ Jesus.

This is what love would do, make each one to be so minded towards another even as toward himself. Then, since there is more than one kind of love, Paul, to shew what love it is that he requires, adds, “according to Christ Jesus.” And what is the advantage of this likemindedness?

That ye may with one mind and one mouth glorify God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. He does not say with one mouth alone, but bids us do it with one will also.

Wherefore receive ye one another, as Christ also received us, to the glory of God.

This is a thing that doeth God especial glory, the

being united. And so if, even against thy will, and in His cause, thou be at variance with thy brother, consider that by putting an end to thine anger thou art glorifying thy Master, and if not on thy brother's account, at all events be reconciled to him on thy Master's. For Christ Himself insists upon this, on all possible grounds, and when addressing His Father He said, "By this shall all men know that Thou hast sent Me, if they be one."

Let us obey then, and knit ourselves to one another. And if any man be minded to quarrel with thee, do not thou quarrel with him, nor give utterance to that cold saying, "Him I love who loveth me: if my right eye does not love me, I tear it out." For these are Satanical sayings, and fit for publicans, and the narrow spirit of the heathen. But thou that art called to a greater estate, and art enrolled in the books of heaven, art bound by a higher law. Speak not then in this way, but when any one is not minded to love thee, then do thou shew the more love, that thou mayest draw him to thee. For he is a member; and when by force any member is sundered from the body, do we not strive to reunite it, and afterwards give it more care and attention? The reward is the greater when a man draws to himself one who is not inclined to love him. For if Christ bids us invite to supper those that cannot make us any recompense, and says that the recompense He gives will be the greater, much more ought we so to act in regard to friendship. Now he that is loved, and loveth in return, doth pay thee a recompense; but he that is loved, and loveth not, hath made not himself, but God thy debtor. And besides, when he loves thee, he needs not much care from thee, but when he loves thee not, then he stands in need of thy assistance. Make not, then, what should be a cause for painstaking, a cause for carelessness; and say not, because he is sick I will take no care of him, (for a sickness indeed is the dulling of love,)

rather do thou warm again that which hath grown cold. "But suppose he will not be warmed; what then?" Continue to do thine own part. "What if he grow more perverse?" He is but procuring to thee so much greater a blessing, and shewing thee forth so much the more as an imitator of Christ. For if the loving one another was to be the characteristic of His disciples,—(as He says, "By this shall all men know that ye are My disciples, if ye have love one to another^a,")—consider how great must that disciple be who loves those that hate him. Thy Master loved those that hated Him, and called them to Him; and the weaker they were the greater was the care He bestowed on them, saying, "They that be whole need not a physician, but they that are sick^b." And He deemed publicans and sinners worthy of His table. And as great as was the dishonour wherewith the Jewish people treated Him, so great was the honour and concern He shewed for them, yea, and much greater. Him do thou strive to imitate. This good work is, indeed, no light one, but, as Paul says, it is one without which not even he that is a martyr can be well-pleasing to God. Say not, then, I am hated, and that is why I do not love: for this is the very reason why thou oughtest to love. And besides, it is not in the nature of things for a man who loves to be lightly hated; for brutish as a person may be, he loves them that love him. This, Christ says, do even the heathen and the publicans. Act, then, in this manner, and cease not to say, "Hate me as much as thou wilt, I will not leave off loving thee;" thus thou wilt humble the quarrelsomeness of thine opponent, and do away with his coldness.

It grieveth me that the generality of men should consider evil actions to be good actions; that looking down on others, for instance, and despising them, should be deemed honourable and dignified. And this is the

^a St. John xiii. 35.

^b St. Matt. ix. 12.

devil's greatest snare, to invest iniquity with the garb of good repute. I have heard men taking credit to themselves for not going near to those who are averse to them. And yet, in doing this, thy Master finds a glory. How often do men despise Him! how often shew aversion to Him! Yet He ceaseth not to run unto them. Say not, then, "I cannot bear to come near those who hate me," but say, "I cannot bear to despise those who despise me." This is the language of Christ's disciple, as the other is of the child of the devil. This makes men honourable and glorious, but the other makes them shameful and ridiculous. It is on this ground that we admire Moses, because even when God said, "Let Me alone, that I may destroy them in Mine anger," he could not bear to despise those who had so often shewn aversion to him, but said, "If Thou wilt forgive them their trespass, forgive it: but if not, blot out me also." This was owing to his being a friend of God and an imitator of Him. And let us not pride ourselves in things for which we ought to hide our faces. What say you, do you scorn a man who believes, whom, when unbelieving, Christ scorned not? Why do I say, scorned not? Why He had such love towards him when he was vile and unsightly, as even to die for him. He then so loved, and so loved such an one, and dost thou now,—when he has been made fair and honourable, now that he is a member of Christ, and hath been taken into thy Master's Body,—dost thou now scorn him? Dost thou not consider what thou art uttering? dost thou not perceive what thou art venturing to do? He hath Christ as his Head, and his Table, and his Garment, his Life, and Light, and Bridegroom,—Christ is everything to him, and dost thou dare to say, "This fellow I despise?" and not this man only, but thousands of others with him? Stay thee, O man, and cease from thy madness! Learn to know thy brother. Learn to cast away these words of folly and madness. Say rather,

“Though he despise me ten thousand times, yet will I never stand aloof from him.” In this way thou wilt gain thy brother, and wilt live to the glory of God, and wilt share the good things to come. To which God grant that we may all attain!

Now I say that Jesus Christ was a Minister of the circumcision for the truth of God, to confirm the promises made unto the Fathers.

There had been a promise made to Abraham, saying, “Unto thee will I give the earth, and to thy seed, and in thy seed shall all the nations be blessed.” But after this, they of the seed of Abraham all became subject to punishment. For the Law brought wrath unto them by being transgressed, and thenceforward deprived them of the promise made unto the Fathers. Therefore the Son came and wrought with the Father, in order that these promises might prove true, and have their issue. For having fulfilled the whole Law, in which He also fulfilled the circumcision, and having by this, and by the Cross, freed them from the curse of the transgression, He suffered not this promise to fall to the ground. When, therefore, Paul calls Him “a Minister of the circumcision,” he means this, that by having been born of the seed of Abraham, and been circumcised, and fulfilled the Law, He took away the curse, stayed the anger of God, and made them fit who were to receive the promises, as being once for all freed from their alienation from God. Again, to prevent these persons from saying, How, then, came Christ to be circumcised, and to keep the whole Law? he turns their argument against themselves. He did this, not that the Law might continue, but that He might put an end to it, and free thee from the curse that lay on thee, and set thee entirely at liberty from the dominion of that Law. It was because thou hadst transgressed the Law that He fulfilled it; not that thou mightest fulfil it; but that He might confirm unto thee the promises made unto the Fathers, which the Law, by shewing

thee to have offended, and to be unworthy of the inheritance, had caused to be suspended. And so thou, having been cast off, art saved by grace. Do not then be contentious, nor perversely cling to the Law at this unsuitable time, since the Law would have cast thee out of the promise, unless Christ had suffered so many things for thee. And He did suffer these things, not because thou wast deserving of salvation, but that God might be true. And then, that this might not puff up the Gentiles, he says, *And that the Gentiles might glorify God for His mercy.* What he means is this: Unworthy as were the Jews, they had promises; but thou hadst not even these, but wert saved from love towards man alone. Hence are the Gentiles the most bound to glorify God. And a glory to God it is that both Jew and Gentile be blended together, be united, praise with one mind, bear with the weaker member, neglect not that which is broken off. Then he adds proofs that the Jews ought to blend themselves with the Gentiles, saying, *As it is written, For this cause I will confess to thee among the Gentiles, and sing unto Thy Name^c; and, Rejoice ye Gentiles with His people^d; and, Praise the Lord, all ye Gentiles; and laud Him all ye people^e; and, There shall be a root of Jesse, and He that shall rise to reign over the Gentiles, in Him shall the Gentiles trust^f.* These quotations he gives to shew that we ought to be united and to glorify God; and also to humble the Jew, that he may not lift himself up over the Gentile; and on the other hand, to persuade the Gentile to be lowly, by shewing him that he had a larger grace than the Jew to answer for. Then he concludes his argument with a prayer: *Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Ghost.*

Let us give thanks to God, and let us have our treasure always in hand, "that through patience and com-

^c Ps. xviii. 49.

^e Ps. cxvii. 1.

^d Deut. xxxii. 43.

^f Isa. xi. 1, 10.

fort of the Scriptures" we may "have-hope," and enjoy the good things to come.

Which God grant that we may all attain, by the grace and love towards man of our Lord Jesus Christ ^s.

THE GOSPEL.

ST. LUKE xxi. 25—33.

"And there shall be signs," &c.

There shall be signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars.

All these signs are more clearly described by St. Matthew: "Then shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven ^h."

As in this world the moon and stars are soon dimmed by the rising of the sun, so at the glorious appearing of Christ shall the sun be darkened, and the moon not shed her ray, and the stars shall fall from heaven, stripped of their attire that they may put on the robe of a better light ⁱ.

At that time,—when the end of this perishing life shall be accomplished, and, as the Apostle says, "The fashion of this world shall pass away ^k,"—then shall succeed a new world, in which, instead of sensible light, Christ Himself, as the King of the new world, shall shine as a sunbeam; and so mighty and so glorious will be His light, that the sun which now shines with such dazzling lustre, the moon and all the stars, shall be hidden by the coming of a far greater light ⁱ.

The powers of heaven shall be shaken.

Whom doth He call the powers of heaven, but the

^s St. Chrysostom, Hom. in loc.

^h St. Ambrose, Cat. Aur.

ⁱ St. Chrys., Cat. Aur.

^k 1 Cor. vii. 31.

ⁱ Eusebius, Cat. Aur.

angels, dominions, principalities and powers? which, at the coming of the strict Judge, shall then appear visibly before our eyes, that they may strictly exact justice upon us, seeing that now our invisible Creator bears patiently with us^m.

The heavenly powers shall be shaken, for when they see the innumerable multitudes condemned, they shall not stand there without tremblingⁿ.

And then shall they see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with power and great glory.

He will come even as He went away, when "A cloud received Him out of their sight^o."

God ever appears in a cloud, according to the Psalms, "Clouds and darkness are round about Him." Therefore shall the Son of Man come in a cloud as God, and not secretly, but in the glory of God. Therefore He adds, "With power and great glory^p."

His first appearance He made in our weakness and lowliness, the second will be in all His own power^q.

And when these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh.

He now turns His words to the consolation of the elect; as if He said, When the buffetings of the world multiply, lift up your heads, that is, rejoice your hearts; for when the world closes whose friends ye are not, the redemption is near for which ye look. To lift up our heads is to raise up our minds to the joys of the heavenly country^r.

Behold the fig-tree, and all the trees; when they now shoot forth, ye see and know of your own selves that summer is now nigh at hand. So likewise ye, when ye see these things come to pass, know ye that the kingdom of God is nigh at hand.

He uses the similitude of the fig-tree, indicating that

^m St. Gregory, Cat. Aur.

^o St. Aug., Cat. Aur.

^q St. Cyril, Cat. Aur.

ⁿ St. Chrys., Cat. Aur.

^p St. Chrys., Cat. Aur.

^r St. Gregory, Cat. Aur.

the interval was not great, but that His advent should quickly succeed. By this He foretells another thing also, a spiritual summer, and a calm that should be on that day (after the present tempest) for the righteous; but for sinners the contrary, winter after summer, as He declares [St. Matt. xxiv. 49, &c.], saying that that day shall come upon them when they are living in luxury.

But not only with reference to the length of the interval did He put forth this parable of the fig-tree, for it was possible to have set this before them in other ways; but He did it that He might hereby confirm His saying, as assuredly to come to pass. For as the one is certain, so also is the other. Thus, whenever He is minded to speak of that which will assuredly come to pass, He brings forward the regular course of nature.

This generation shall not pass away, till all be fulfilled.

All what? The predictions concerning Jerusalem, and the wars, and the famines, and the pestilences, and the earthquakes; those concerning the false Christs, and the false prophets, and the seditions, the tumults, and the preaching of the Gospel everywhere, and all things which were to occur before His coming. How then did He say, "This generation?" Not speaking of the generation then living, but of the generation of the believers. For he is wont to distinguish a generation not by times only, but also by the mode of religious service and practice; as when He saith, "This is the generation of them that seek the Lord^s."

Heaven and earth shall pass away, but My words shall not pass away.

It were more easy for these firm, fixed, and immoveable bodies to be destroyed, than for any of My words to fall to the ground. And he who gainsays these things, let him test His sayings, and when he

hath found them true, (as he surely will find them,) let him, from that which is past, believe also the things that are to come. Let him search out all things with diligence, and he will see the events bearing witness to the truth of the prophecy¹.

Woe is me for that fearful day! For though we ought to rejoice when we hear these things, we feel pain, and are dejected, and our countenance is sad. Or is it I only that feel thus, and do ye rejoice in hearing of them? Upon me, at least, there comes a kind of shudder, and I lament bitterly, and groan from the very depth of my heart. For I have no part in these things, but in those that are spoken afterwards, that are spoken unto the foolish virgins, unto him that buried the talent he had received, unto the wicked servant. For this cause I weep, to think from what glory we are to be cast out, from what hope of blessings; and this for ever, and only to spare ourselves a little labour. For if, indeed, the toil were great, and the time long, and the burden intolerable, even so ought we to do all that is required of us, although many of the remiss might seem to have at least some excuse, a poor excuse, indeed; but now we can put forward no such plea; which circumstance most of all will torture us no less than hell at that time, that for want of a slight endeavour, and a little toil, we have lost heaven, and the unspeakable blessings. For the time is short, and the labour small, and yet we faint and are supine. We strive on earth, and the crown is in heaven; we are punished of men, and are honoured of God; the race is for two days, and the reward for endless ages; the struggle is in a corruptible body, and the rewards are in an incorruptible.

Doth He not, then, justly turn away from us, and punish us, when He is giving Himself up to us for all things, and we are resisting Him? It is surely evident. For whether thou art desirous to adorn thyself,

¹ St. Chrysostom, Hom. in Matt.

“Let it,” He saith, “be with My ornaments;” or to arm thyself, “with My arms;” or to clothe thyself, “with My raiment;” or to feed thyself, “at My Table;” or to journey, “on My way;” or to inherit, “My inheritance;” or to enter a country, “the city of which I am the Builder and Maker;” or to build an house, “amongst My tabernacles;” “for I, so far from asking thee for a recompense of the things that I give thee, do even make Myself owe thee a recompense for this very thing, if thou be willing to use all I have.” (What can be equal to this munificence?) “I am Father, I am Brother, I am Bridegroom, I am Dwelling-place, I am Food, I am Raiment, I am Root, I am Foundation; all, whatsoever thou willest, I am.” “Be thou in need of nothing, I will be even a servant; for I came to minister, not to be ministered unto. I am Friend, and Member, and Head, and Brother, and Sister, and Mother; I am all; only cling thou closely to Me. I was poor for thee, and a wanderer for thee, on the Cross for thee, in the tomb for thee; above I intercede for thee to the Father, on earth I am come for thy sake an ambassador from My Father. Thou art all things to Me; brother, and joint-heir, and friend, and member.” What wouldest thou more? Why dost thou turn away from Him who loveth thee? Why dost thou labour for the world? Why dost thou draw water into a broken cistern? For this it is to labour for the present life. Why dost thou beat the air^u? Why dost thou “run in vain^x?”

Hath not every act its proper end? It is surely plain. Do thou, then, shew the end of thy worldly eagerness. But thou canst not; for “vanity of vanities, all is vanity^y.” Let us go to the tombs; shew me thy father; shew me thy wife. Where is he that was clad in raiment of gold? he that rode in the chariot? he that had armies, that had the girdle^z, that had the

^u 1 Cor. ix. 26.^x Gal. ii. 2.^y Eccles. i. 2.^z A badge of military rank.

heralds? he that was slaying these, and casting those into prison? he that put to death whom he would put to death, and set free whom he was minded to set free? I see nothing but bones, and a worm, and a spider's web; all those things on earth, all are a fable, all a dream, and a shadow, and a tale that is told; a picture, or not so much as a picture, for in the picture we see at least a semblance, but here we see not even this.

And would that the evil stopped with this. For now the honour, and the luxury, and the distinction, end with a shadow, with words; but the consequences of them are no longer limited to a shadow and to words, but continue, and will pass over with us elsewhere, and will be manifest to all,—the rapine, the covetousness, the fornications, the adulteries, the dreadful things beyond number; these remain not in similitude, written in ashes, but written above, both words and deeds.

With what eyes shall we then behold Christ? For if a son could not bear to see his father when conscious that he had sinned against him, upon Him who infinitely exceeds a father in forbearance, how shall we look? how shall we bear it? For we shall stand at Christ's judgment-seat, and there will be a strict enquiry into all things.

Let us, then, humble ourselves; and let them who now are obstinate unbelievers of the judgment believe it henceforth, and become better men; that having lived here in a manner worthy of the kingdom, we may attain unto the good things to come, by the grace and love towards man of our Lord Jesus Christ; to whom be glory for ever and ever^a. Amen.

^a St. Chrysostom, Hom. on St. Matt. xxiv.

THE THIRD SUNDAY IN ADVENT.

THE EPISTLE.

1 CORINTHIANS iv. 1—5.

“ Let a man so account of us,” &c.

Let a man so account of us, as of the ministers of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God.

It saith stewards, indicating that we ought not to give these things unto all, but unto those to whom it is due, and to whom it is fitting that we should minister.

Moreover it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful; that is, that he do not appropriate to himself his master's goods; that he do not as a master lay claim to them for himself, but that he administer them to others as a steward. For the duty of a steward is to administer well the things committed to his charge, not saying that his master's things are his own; nay, rather, that his own are his master's. Let every one think on these things, both he that hath power in speech and he that possesseth wealth, namely, that he hath been entrusted with a master's goods, and that they are not his own. Let him not keep them to himself, nor set them down to his own account; but let him reckon them as God's, who gave them all. Wouldst thou see faithful stewards? hear what Peter saith: “Why look ye so earnestly on us, as though by our own power or holiness we had made this man to walk^a?” And Paul, when he had said, “I laboured more abundantly than they all,” added, “yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me^b.”

But with me it is a very small thing that I should be

^a Acts iii. 12.

^b 1 Cor. xv. 10.

judged of you, or of man's judgment: yea, I judge not mine own self. For I know nothing by myself; yet am I not hereby justified: but He that judgeth me is the Lord.

Together with all other ills, I know not how, there hath come upon man's nature the disease of restless prying, and of unseasonable curiosity; which Christ Himself rebuked, saying, "Judge not, that ye be not judged^c." A kind of thing that bringeth to us no pleasure, but rather punishment and vengeance. For though we are ourselves full of evil, and have the beam in our own eye, we become exact inquisitors into the offences of our neighbours, which are not bigger than motes. And so it was falling out at Corinth. Religious men, and dear to God, were enduring ridicule and expulsion for their want of learning; while others, guilty of innumerable sins, were being highly esteemed because of their fluent speech. Then, like persons sitting in public to try causes, the Corinthians kept rashly passing judgments like these: "Such an one is worthy," "such an one is better than such another;" "this man is inferior to that, that man better than this;" and, leaving off mourning for their own evil ways, they were become judges over others; and in this way were kindling grievous strife.

Mark, then, how wisely Paul corrects them. For since he had said, "Moreover it is required in stewards that a man be found faithful," and it seemed as if he were giving them an opening to judge and pry into each man's life, and this was to aggravate party feeling; lest such should be the effect upon them, he draws them away from petty disputation, saying, "With me it is a very small thing that I should be judged of you;" so carrying on the discourse in his own person.

Let no one condemn Paul for arrogance, though he saith that no man is worthy to pass sentence upon him. For, first, he saith those things not for his own sake,

^c St. Matt. vii. 1.

but wishing to rescue others from the reproach which they had incurred from the Corinthians. In the next place, he limits not the matter to the Corinthians, but deposes even himself from this right of judging, saying that such things were beyond his decision. At least he adds, "I judge not mine own self." Mark the expression, how entirely free from arrogance, in that not even he himself, he saith, is capable of so great exactness.

Then, because this saying seemed to be that of one greatly extolling himself, this too he corrects, saying, "yet am I not hereby justified." What then? Ought we not to judge ourselves and our own misdeeds? Yes, surely, there is great need to do this when we sin. But Paul said not this. "For I am not," saith he, "conscious to myself of anything^d." What misdeed, then, was he to judge, when he was conscious of none? Yet he saith he was not hereby justified. We, who have our conscience covered with wounds, and are conscious to ourselves of nothing good, but quite the contrary, what can we say?

And how could it be, if he were conscious to himself of nothing, that he was not justified? Because it was possible for him to have committed certain sins, not being himself aware of their being sins. From this make thine estimate how great shall be the strictness of the future judgment. It is not as considering himself unblameable, that he saith it is unmeet for him to be judged by them, but to stop the mouths of those who were judging improperly. Thou wert not enjoined, O man! to judge others, but to prove thine own doings. Why, then, dost thou seize upon the office of the Lord? Judgment is His, not thine.

To which effect he adds, *Therefore judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come, who both will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts; and then shall every man*

^d Lit. trans.

have praise of God. Is it not, then, right that our teachers should judge us? It is right in the case of open and confessed sins, and with fitting opportunity, and even then with inward pain and vexation. Not as did the Corinthians, with vainglory and arrogance. For in this instance he is not speaking about the condemnation of those sins which all own to be such, but about preferring one man before another, and making comparisons of the lives of others. For these things He alone can judge with accuracy, who is to judge our secret doings; to judge which of these be worthy of greater, and which of less, punishment or honour. We do this according to what meets our eye. But Paul saith, "if in mine own errors I know nothing clearly, how can I be worthy to pass sentence on other men? and how shall I, who know not mine own state with accuracy, be able to judge of the state of others?" Now if Paul felt this, much more should we.

On two accounts then, you see, or rather on three, correct judgment is not in our power. First, because though we be conscious to ourselves of nothing, still we need one to reprove our sins with strictness; next, because the most part of the things which are done escape us and are concealed; and thirdly, because many things which are done by others seem fair to us, but come not from a right motive. Why say ye then that no sin hath been committed by this or that person, that such an one is better than such another? seeing that we are not to pronounce upon this, even concerning him who is conscious to himself of nothing. He who discerns secrets, He it is who judges with certainty.

Again we do many things, good indeed in themselves, but not done of a right mind. Our motives men do not know, but He that searcheth the hearts perfectly knows them, and He will bring all such things into view at that day. Wherefore He saith, "Who both will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts."

On that day we shall have God to praise us: as Paul saith, "And then shall every man have praise of God." The praise which cometh from men is fleeting and proceeds sometimes from no good intention, but that which cometh from God shines out clearly and abideth continually. For when He who knew all things before their creation, and who is free from all passion, gives praise, then the evidence of our virtue is unquestionable.

Knowing, then, these things, let us so act as to be praised of God, and receive the greatest blessings, which may God grant us all to attain through the grace and loving-kindness of our Lord Jesus Christ; to whom, with the Father and the Holy Spirit, be glory, power, and honour, now and always, unto all the ages of eternity. Amen^e.

THE GOSPEL.

ST. MATTHEW xi. 2—10.

"Now when John," &c.

Now when John had heard in the prison the works of Christ, he sent two of his disciples, and asked Him, saying, Art Thou He that should come, or do we look for another?

Luke saith the disciples told John of the miracles, and then he sent them. This, however, presents no difficulty, but only matter for consideration, as it, amongst other things, indicates their jealousy of Jesus. What follows, however, is among the controverted points. Of what nature is their question, "Art Thou He that should come, or do we look for another?" He who knew Him before His miracles, he who had learned it of the Spirit, he who heard it of the Father, he

^e St. Chrysostom.

who had proclaimed Him before all men, doth he now send to learn of Him whether it be Himself or no? If thou dost not know that it is surely He, how canst thou expect to be believed, asserting, as thou dost, things whereof thou art ignorant? He who is to bear witness to others must first be himself worthy of credit. Didst thou not say, I am not meet to loose the latchet of His shoe^f? Didst thou not say, "I knew Him not: but He that sent me to baptize with water, the same said unto me, Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending, and remaining on Him, the same is He which baptizeth with the Holy Ghost^g?" Didst thou not see the Spirit in the form of a dove? Didst thou not hear the voice? Didst thou not forbid Him, saying, "I have need to be baptized of Thee^h?" Didst thou not say even to thy disciples, "He must increase, but I must decreaseⁱ?" Didst thou not teach the people that it was He who should baptize them with the Holy Ghost, and with fire^k? and that He was "the Lamb of God which taketh away the sins of the world^l?" Didst thou not, before His signs and miracles, proclaim all these things? How, then, now, when He hath been manifested to all, and His fame hath gone out on all sides,—now that the dead have been raised, and devils have been driven away, and miracles so great have been displayed,—dost thou, after all these things, send to enquire this of Him?

What, then? were all these sayings but fables and a stage-play? Nay, who that hath any understanding would say this? I say not, Would John, he who leaped in the womb at the approach of the mother of his Lord, who before his own birth proclaimed Jesus,—John, the denizen of the wilderness, living on earth the life of angels,—I say not, Would John have acted thus? but I say, Had he even been one of the lowest among men, one of the outcasts of the earth,

^f St. John i. 27.^g St. John i. 33.^h St. Matt. iii. 14.ⁱ St. John iii. 30.^k St. Matt. iii. 11.^l St. John i. 29.

would he not have hesitated to act thus, after so many testimonies given both by himself and by others?

It is evident, then, that John did not send as being himself in doubt, nor did he ask as being himself ignorant. And, surely, neither could it be said that though he was not ignorant, yet by his imprisonment he had become timid; for he was not looking for deliverance; nor, if he had been looking for it, would he, armed as he was against death, have for it betrayed his duty to God. If he had not been prepared for death, he would not have evinced so great courage towards a whole people practised in shedding the blood of prophets; nor would he with so much boldness have rebuked the savage tyrant as though he were a little child, chiding him in the midst of the city, and in the hearing of all men. And even if he were become timid, how was it that he was not ashamed to ask the question by his own disciples, in whose presence he had so often borne witness to Christ, when he might have asked it by others? He surely knew full well that they were jealous of Christ, and desired to find some excuse for rejecting Him.

What, then, is it which John is bringing about? For that he did not doubt in this matter is evident. With what intent, then, did he send to ask? John's disciples were keeping away from Jesus, this surely is evident. They had always a jealous feeling respecting Him. This is plain from what they said to their master: "He that was with thee beyond Jordan, to whom thou bearest witness, behold the same baptizeth, and all men come to Him ^m." And again, from what they said to Christ: "Why do we and the Pharisees fast oft, but Thy disciples fast not ⁿ?" For as yet they knew not who Christ was; but imagining Jesus to be a mere man, and John greater than all other men, they were vexed at seeing the former held in high esteem, and the latter, as he had himself said, decreasing. And this

^m St. John iii. 26.

ⁿ St. Matt. ix. 14.

hindered them from coming to Christ, their jealousy quite blocking up their access. So long as John was with them, he was continually exhorting and instructing them; and not even so did he persuade them, but when he was now at the point of death, he uses the more diligence, fearing lest he might leave a foundation for false doctrine, and that they might continue severed from Christ. For even as at the first he was diligent to bring to Christ all that pertained to himself, so now, having hitherto failed to persuade these disciples, he becomes the more zealous towards his end.

If he had said, "Go ye away unto Him, He is greater than I am," he would not have persuaded them, unwilling as they were to be separated from him; rather would he have been thought to say it out of modesty, and they would have been the more closely bound to him. Or if he had held his peace, then again nothing was gained. What, then, doth he? He waits to hear from them that Christ is working miracles, and even then he doth not admonish them, nor doth he send all, but only two, (whom perhaps he knew to be more teachable than the rest,) that the enquiry might be made without suspicion, and that from the works they might learn the difference between Jesus and himself. He saith, Go ye, and say, "Art thou He that should come, or do we look for another?"

But Christ, knowing the purpose of John, did not say, "I am He," although it was what naturally followed for Him to say; for this, again, would have offended the hearers; but He leaves them to learn the truth from His works. "When the men were come to Him," we are told, "He cured many." Where was the fitness that, being asked, "Art thou He?" He should say nothing to that question, but should presently cure them that were sick, unless it had been his intention thus to establish the point? They would, of

course, account the testimony of His works more sure, and farther above suspicion, than that of His words.

Knowing, therefore, as being God, the motive with which John had sent them, He straightway cured the blind, the lame, and many others; not to teach him (for how should He teach him who was already convinced), but to teach these who were doubting. Having healed many, He saith, *Go and shew John again those things which ye do hear and see: the blind receive their sight, and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, and the poor have the Gospel preached to them.* And He added, *Blessed is he whosoever shall not be offended in Me*; shewing by this covert reproof that He knew their unuttered thoughts. By thus simply setting forth their case, calling no witness to His implied accusation, but leaving it to their own consciences to attest its justice, He drew them unto Himself, in saying, "Blessed is he, whosoever shall not be offended in Me," for His secret meaning was of them.

Some, however, affirm that this was not the cause of John's sending the disciples, but that he was himself in ignorance; yet not altogether in ignorance, for that he knew that Jesus was the Christ, but that he knew not whether He was to die for mankind, therefore he said, "Art Thou He that should come?" This is not tenable, for John was not ignorant of this fact. He proclaimed it, and bare record of it first; "Behold," saith he, "the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world^p."

Now, by calling Him a Lamb, he proclaimed the Cross; and again by saying, "That taketh away the sin of the world," for not otherwise than by the Cross was this done. And the saying, "He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost^q," is a foretelling of the events that followed the Resurrection.

Well, say they, he knew that Christ was to rise again,

^p St. John i. 29.

^q St. Matt. iii. 11.

and that He was to give the Holy Ghost; but that He should likewise be crucified, John knew not. How, then, could He rise again, who had not suffered, nor been crucified? and how was this John greater than a prophet, if he knew not even what the prophets knew? That he was greater than a prophet Christ Himself bare record, but that the prophets knew of the Passion is surely plain. For so Isaiah saith, "He is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb^r." And before this he saith, "There shall be a root of Jesse, and He that shall rise again to rule the Gentiles, in Him shall the Gentiles trust^s." Then speaking of His Passion, and of the ensuing glory, he added, "And His rest shall be honour." And this prophet foretold not only that He should be crucified, but also with whom: "And He was numbered with the transgressors^t." And not this only, but that He should not even plead for Himself, for "He opened not His mouth;" and that He should be unjustly condemned, "For in His humiliation," saith he, "His judgment was taken away." And again, before this, David describes the judgment-hall. "Why do the heathen rage, and the people imagine a vain thing? The kings of the earth stand up, and the rulers are gathered together against the Lord and against His anointed^u." Elsewhere he mentions the image of the Cross, saying on this wise, "They pierced My hands and My feet^x;" and with exactness he adds those things which the soldiers were emboldened to do, "For they part My garments among them, and cast lots upon My vesture." And that they also offered Him vinegar, for "They gave Me gall for My meat, and in My thirst they gave Me vinegar to drink^y."

So thus the prophets so many years before spoke of the hall of judgment, and of the condemnation, and of them that were crucified with Him, and of the division

^r Isa. liii. 7.

^s Ps. ii. 1, 2.

^t Isa. xi. 10; lxx.

^u Ps. xxii. 16.

^x Isa. liii. 12.

^y Ps. lxix. 21.

of the garments, and of the lot cast upon them, and of much besides, and was John, greater than all, ignorant of these things? Nay, is this reasonable?

And as they departed, Jesus began to say unto the multitudes concerning John, What went ye out into the wilderness to see? a reed shaken with the wind? But what went ye out for to see? a man clothed in soft raiment? behold, they that wear soft clothing are in kings' houses. But what went ye out for to see? a prophet? yea, I say unto you, and more than a prophet.

The matter of John's disciples had been well ordered, and they were gone away assured by the miracles which had just been performed; but there was need after this of a remedy as regarded the people. For although the disciples would not suspect any evil of their own master, the common people might, from the enquiry of John's disciples, form many strange suspicions, not knowing the intent with which he had sent them. And it was natural for them to reason with themselves, "He that bore such abundant witness, hath he now changed his opinion, and doth he doubt whether this or another be He that should come? Can it be, that in opposition to Jesus he says this? that the prison hath made him timid? that his former words were spoken at random?" It being, then, natural for the people to suspect many such things, see how Christ removes these their suspicions. For, *As they departed, He began to say unto the multitudes.* Why as they departed? That He might not seem to be flattering their master.

In correcting the people, He doth not make public their suspicions, but only replies to the inward thoughts that were disturbing them, proving that He knew the secrets of all hearts. For He saith not, as unto the Jews, "Wherefore think ye evil?" Because, though it was in their minds, yet not out of wickedness did they so reason, but out of ignorance. Wherefore, neither doth He speak unto them in the way of re-

¹ St. Matt. ix. 4.

buke, but merely sets them right, and defends John; signifying that he is not fallen away from his former belief, neither is he changed, not being a man easily swayed or fickle, but one steadfast and firm, and far from being a betrayer of the truths committed unto him.

And in establishing this, He gives not at first His own sentence, but makes use of their former testimony, pointing out how they bore witness to his firmness, not by their words only, but also by their deeds.

Wherefore He saith, "What went ye out into the wilderness to see?" To see a pitiful and flexible kind of man? Nay, this were out of all reason, this is not what is indicated by the concourse of all men into the wilderness; so many cities would not have thus poured themselves out towards the wilderness and the river Jordan, had they not expected to see some great and marvellous person, one firmer than any rock. Yea, it was not surely *a reed shaken by the wind* that ye went out to see.

But what went ye out for to see? a man clothed in soft raiment? behold, they that wear soft clothing are in kings' houses.

Now His meaning is this. John was not a waverer, and this ye yourselves proved by your earnestness in following him. Much less could any one say that he was indeed firm at first, but afterwards, having made himself a slave to luxury, he became indolent. John, saith He, was not such a character by nature (it was not a reed that ye went out to see,) neither did he become like a reed by giving himself up to luxury. That he did not enslave himself to luxury is shewn by his garb, and by the wilderness, and the prison. For, if he had been minded to wear soft raiment, he would not have lived in the wilderness, nor have been in prison, but in the king's courts, it having been in his power, merely by keeping silence, to enjoy unbounded honour. For if Herod so revered John, even when he had rebuked him, and was in chains,

much more would he have honoured him had he held his peace. John had thus given proof of his firmness and fortitude, and how then could he justly incur those suspicions?

When, therefore, by the place, by John's garments, by the concourse to him of the people, Christ had delineated his character, He brings forward the prophet. Having said, *What went ye out for to see? a prophet? yea, I say unto you, and more than a prophet;* He goes on, *For this is he of whom it is written, Behold, I send My messenger before Thy face, which shall prepare Thy way before Thee.* Having before set down the testimony of the Jews, he now brings forward that of the prophets; or rather, He puts in the first place the sentence of the Jews, which must have had great weight, the witness being borne by enemies; secondly, the man's life; thirdly, his own judgment; fourthly, the prophet; thus in every way stopping their mouths.

Having said that John was greater than a prophet, He signifies in what he was greater. And in what was he greater? in being nearer Him that was come. For, *I send*, saith He, *My messenger before Thy face;* that is, nigh Thee. As with kings, they who ride near the chariot are more illustrious than others, so John also appears in his course nearer the Advent of Christ, and so greater than the ancient prophets.

This is he of whom it is written, Behold, I send My messenger before Thy face, which shall prepare Thy way before Thee^a.

^a St. Chrysostom.

THE FOURTH SUNDAY IN ADVENT.

THE EPISTLE.

PHILIPPIANS iv. 4—7.

“ Rejoice in the Lord alway,” &c.

“ BLESSED are they that mourn^a,” and, “ Woe unto you that laugh^b,” saith Christ. How, then, saith St. Paul, *Rejoice in the Lord alway*? Is he not here opposed to Christ? God forbid. “ Woe unto them that laugh,” said Christ, speaking of the laughter of this world. He blessed those who mourn, who mourn not simply under bereavement, but who are pricked at heart; who mourn for their sins, who mourn for their own faults, or even for the faults of others. That joy is not contrary to this grief, but from this grief that joy has its birth. He who grieveth for his faults, and confesseth them, rejoiceth. For it is possible to grieve for our sins and yet to rejoice in Christ. Therefore Paul saith, *Rejoice in the Lord*. For this can but mean, live such a life that you may rejoice. These are the words of one who brings comfort, of one who declares that he who is in God rejoiceth alway. Yea, though he be afflicted, yea, whatever he may suffer, such a man alway rejoiceth. Hear what Luke saith of the Apostles^c; that they departed from the presence of the council rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for His Name. If scourging and bonds, which seem to be the most grievous of all things, if these produce joy, what can produce grief in us?

^a St. Matt. v. 4.

^b St. Luke vi. 25.

^c Acts v. 41.

Again I say, Rejoice. Well hath he repeated the word. For since the nature of these things is such as to produce grief, the repetition shews that they must rejoice even in these circumstances.

Let your moderation be known unto all men. He had said before of some, "Whose God is their belly, and whose glory is in their shame," and that they "mind earthly things." Since, then, it was probable that his hearers would be at enmity with these wicked ones, he exhorteth them to have nothing in common with them, but yet to use them with all gentleness, and that not only such as were their brethren, but also their enemies and opposers. Tell me, wherefore are ye distressed? Because they rise in opposition? Because ye see them living in luxury? *Be careful for nothing.* Already the Judgment is at hand; shortly shall they give account of their actions. Are ye in hardship while they are in luxury? These things shall shortly come to an end. Do they lay plots against you and threaten you? It shall not at last turn out to their advantage. The Judgment is already near, when all this shall be reversed. *Be careful for nothing.* Already the recompense is at hand. If ye are kindly disposed towards those who devise mischief against you, if poverty, if death, if aught else that is terrible threaten you, all these things shall come to an end. *Be careful for nothing: but in every thing, by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known unto God.* There is this for our consolation, *the Lord is at hand.* And again, "I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world^d."

Behold another consolation, a medicine which healeth pain, and grief, and distress. And what is this? Prayer, thanksgiving in all things. He wills that our prayers should not simply be requests, but also thanksgivings. How can he ask for future blessings who is not thankful for the past? *But in all,* he saith, that

^d St. Matt. xxviii. 20.

is, in everything, *by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving*. Wherefore we ought to give thanks for all things, even for those which seem to be grievous, for this is the part of the truly thankful man. In the one case, the nature of the thing demands the giving of thanks; but in the other, this springs from a grateful soul, one earnestly affected towards God. God accepteth these prayers, but others He receiveth not. Wherefore offer up such prayers as may be accepted; for He disposeth all things for our profit, though we know it not. *And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus.* The peace of God, he saith, which He hath given to men, *passeth all understanding*. What meaneth this? Who could have expected, who could have hoped, that so great a blessing would be given? It exceeds not the speech alone of man, but also man's understanding. For His enemies, for those who hated Him, for those who obstinately turned away from Him,—for these He refused not to deliver up His only-begotten, that He might make peace with us. This peace, then, i.e. the reconciliation, the love of God, shall guard your hearts and minds.

The part of a teacher is not only to exhort, but also to pray, and by supplication to aid his disciples, that they may neither be overwhelmed by temptation, nor carried away by deceit. It is as if Paul had said, "May He who hath delivered you in such sort as the mind of man cannot comprehend, may He Himself guard you and preserve you, so that you suffer no ill." He means either this, or that the peace of which Christ speaketh, "Peace I leave with you, My peace I give unto you^c," that this may guard you; for this peace, too, exceedeth man's understanding. When He tells us to be at peace with our enemies, with those who treat us unjustly, who are at war and in enmity with

^c St. John xiv. 27.

us, is not even this beyond man's understanding? But rather let us look to that other peace. If the peace of God passeth all understanding, much more doth He Himself, who giveth peace, pass all understanding, not ours alone, but that of angels and the powers above^f.

THE GOSPEL.

ST. JOHN i. 19—28.

“ This is the record of John,” &c.

YE have many times heard, holy brethren, that John the Baptist was counted worthy to be the friend of the Bridegroom; one zealous for the Bridegroom, not for himself; not seeking his own honour, but that of his Judge, whom, as a herald, he preceded. Wherefore, while to the prophets who went before, it was given to foretel future events concerning Christ, to John it was given to point Christ out with the finger. For like as Christ was unknown before He came, to those who believed not the prophets, so was He unknown of the Jews when He was actually come. For He came at the first in humble guise, and concealed; the more concealed in proportion as He was the more humble; and the people through their pride despising the humility of God, crucified their Saviour, and made of Him their condemning Judge.

But will not He who at first came concealed by His humility, come the next time manifested by His exaltation? You hear in the Psalm: “ God shall come manifestly, our God, and shall not keep silence^g.” He kept silence that He might be judged; He will not keep silence when He comes to judge. How did He

^f St. Chrysostom.

^g Ps. l. 3, LXX.

keep silence? Ask Isaiah: "He is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so He openeth not His mouth^a." But "He shall come manifestly, and shall not keep silence." How manifestly? "A fire shall devour before Him, and round about Him a mighty tempest¹." That tempest is wholly to carry away from the threshing-floor the chaff which is now in threshing; that fire to consume what the tempest carries away. Now, however, He is silent; silent in judgment but not in precept. For if Christ is altogether silent, what mean these Gospels? what the voices of the Apostles? the canticles of the Psalms? the lofty utterances of the prophets? Truly in all these Christ is not silent. Howbeit He is silent for the present in not taking vengeance, not silent as to giving warning. But He will come in surpassing brightness to take vengeance, and will be seen of all, even of those who believe not on Him. But then, though present He was concealed, forasmuch as it behoved Him to be despised; for unless He had been despised He would not have been crucified, and unless He had been crucified He would not have shed His blood, the price with which He redeemed us. In order that He might give the price for us, He was crucified; that He might be crucified, He was despised; that He might be despised, He appeared in humble guise.

Yet forasmuch as He appeared, so to speak, in the night, in a mortal body, He lighted for Himself a lamp by which He might be seen. That lamp was John; and the portion of the Gospel which we are now reading, contains his words, first, which is the chief point, confessing that he was not the Christ. So great was John's excellency, that he might have been believed to be the Christ; and herein did he give proof of his humility, that he said he was not when he might have

^a Ps. liii. 7.

¹ Ps. l. 3.

had it believed that he was. Accordingly, *this is the record of John, when the Jews sent Priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, Who art thou?* They would not have sent unless they had been moved by the greatness of his authority in taking upon him to baptize. *And he confessed, and denied not; but confessed; confessed what? I am not the Christ.*

And they asked him, What then? Art thou Elias? They knew that Elias was to be the forerunner of Christ, for no Jew was ignorant of the name of Christ^k. They did not think Jesus to be the Christ, but they were far from thinking that the Christ would not come. It was even while they were hoping for His coming, that they stumbled as they did at Him already come. Stumbled as at a low mean stone. For that stone, already indeed cut out of the mountain without hands (as saith the Prophet Daniel), was still small. But what follows? and that stone, saith he, grew and "became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth^l." See then, beloved, what I mean. Christ, as seen by the Jews, had already been cut out of the mountain; by the mountain he means the Jewish kingdom, but the Jewish kingdom had not covered the whole face of the earth. The stone was cut out from thence, because from thence the Lord was born, in His coming among men. And why "without hands?" because Christ was born of a virgin without the act of man. Well, that stone cut out without hands was already before the eyes of the Jews, but it was low and mean, it had not yet grown and filled the world. This He makes good in His Kingdom, which is the Church, with which He hath filled the whole earth. It was as not yet grown, that they stumbled at Him as at a stone; and that was fulfilled in them which is written, "Whosoever shall fall on this stone shall be broken, but on whomsoever it shall fall, it will grind him to powder^m." At first they fell

^k Christ is the Greek form of the Hebrew word Messiah.

^l Dan. ii. 35.

^m St. Matt. xxi. 44.

upon Him, mean and lowly; highly exalted, He shall one day fall upon them. But that He may, when He shall so come, grind them to powder, He first, in His low estate breaks them. They stumbled at Him and were broken; not ground to powder, but broken. He shall come highly exalted, and grind them to powder. Howbeit some allowance may be made for the Jews, that they stumbled at the stone which was not yet grown. What sort of men must those be who have stumbled even at the mountain? You know whom I mean, they who deny the Church diffused throughout the whole world; stumble, not at the lowly stone, but at the mountain itself. The blind Jews did not see the lowly stone, how great the blindness of such as see not the mountain!

So, then, they saw Him in His low estate, and did not recognise Him. He was shewn to them by a lamp. For at the first, he, than whom no greater had arisen among those born of women, said, "I am not the Christ." He was asked, *Art thou Elias?* He answered, *I am not*; and thus furnishes matter for question. It is to be feared that persons not sufficiently comprehending his meaning, may imagine a contradiction between John's words and the words of Christ. For when the Lord Jesus Christ in the Gospel had been saying certain things of Himself, the disciples answered Him, "Why then say the scribes, that Elias must first come?" The Lord replied, "Elias is come already, and they . . . have done unto him whatsoever they listed^o. And if ye will receive it, John the Baptist is he." The Lord Jesus Christ said Elias is already come, and he is John the Baptist; but when John was asked, he confessed that he was not Elias, just as he confessed that he was not the Christ. And of course, as it was a true confession that he was not the Christ, so was it a true confession that he was not Elias. How, then, shall we reconcile the saying of the

^a St. Matt. xvii. 10.

^o St. Matt. xi. 14.

herald with that of the Judge? we cannot for a moment suppose that the herald speaks a falsehood, for he speaks that which he hears from the Judge. Wherefore, then, doth he say, *I am not Elias*, while the Lord saith he is Elias? Because the Lord Jesus Christ was pleased in him to prefigure His future coming, and to speak with this meaning, that John was in the spirit of Elias. And what John was to the first advent, that will Elias be to the second advent. As there are two advents of the Judge, so there are two heralds. The Judge indeed one and the same, but the heralds two.

When John was born, the Holy Ghost prophesied of him, "He shall go before [the Highest] in the spirit and power of Elias^p." Not, then, actually Elias, but in the spirit and power of Elias. That is, in the same holy spirit, in Elias' stead. Wherefore in Elias' stead? Because what Elias will be for the second, that was John for the first advent. John's answer, then, was literal, *I am not Elias*; but the Lord's answer was figurative; "Elias, the same is John." If thou regard the figurative forerunner, John is Elias; if thou ask for the person in the strict and literal sense, John was John, Elias, Elias. The Lord, therefore, in respect of prefiguration said truly, "This is Elias;" and John truly, in respect of the proper and literal sense, *I am not Elias*. Neither John spake falsely, nor the Lord falsely; provided only thou understand. But who shall understand? He who imitateth the lowliness of the herald, and acknowledgeth the loftiness of the Judge. For nothing could be more lowly than the herald. My brethren, in nothing had John so great merit as in this humility, in that when, (so extraordinary were his grace and excellence,) he might have been thought to be the Christ, and have been held in place of the Christ, yet he confessed openly and said, "I am not the Christ."

And they asked him, What then? Art thou Elias?

^p St. Luke i. 17.

And he saith, I am not. Art thou a^a Prophet? And he answered, No. Then said they unto him, Who art thou? that we may give an answer to them that sent us. What sayest thou of thyself? He said, I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness, Make straight the way of the Lord.

Would you not have thought that a herald's cry should be, "Stand aside! make way!" Yes, truly, a herald cries, "Stand aside!" John cries, "Come!" A herald makes men stand back from the Judge; John calls men to the Judge, nay, rather, John calls them to One that is lowly, that it may not be felt how lofty He is as the Judge. He said not, I am John, I am Elias, I am a prophet. But what said he? This is what I am called, *The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Make straight the way of the Lord.* I am prophecy itself.

And they which were sent were of the Pharisees, that is, of the chief men among the Jews. And they asked him, and said unto him, Why baptizest thou then, if thou be not that Christ, nor Elias, neither that Prophet? As if to baptize implied presumption; as if they would enquire, In what character dost thou baptize? We ask whether thou art the Christ, thou sayest thou art not; we ask whether thou art not Elias, because we know that Elias is to precede Christ's coming, thou answerest, No; we ask whether thou art not some herald coming a long while before, that is to say, a prophet, and so hast received this authority, but thou sayest that thou art not even a prophet. Neither was John a prophet, he was greater than a prophet. The Lord witnessed of him: "What went ye out into the wilderness to see? a prophet? yea, I say unto you, and more than a prophet." For the prophets foretold of Christ long before, John pointed to Him actually come.

Why baptizest thou then, if thou be not that Christ, nor Elias, neither that Prophet? John answered them,

^a Margin.

saying, I baptize with water : but there standeth one among you, whom ye know not. Being humble He was not seen, therefore it was that the lamp was lighted. Mark how John, who might have been accounted other than he was, gives place. He it is who coming after me is preferred before me, whose shoe's latchet I am not worthy to unloose. How greatly did he abase himself: highly, therefore, was he lifted up ; for he that humbleth himself shall be exalted ^r.

These things were done in Bethabara beyond Jordan, where John was baptizing.

The Evangelist marks the place for this reason : since he was not about to relate matters of old date, but such as had come to pass but a little time before, he makes those who were present, and had beheld these things, witnesses of his words, and supplies proof from the places themselves. Confident that he was adding nothing, but simply and with truth describing things as they were, he draws from the places a testimony to his truth ^s.

^r St. Augustine.

^s St. Chrysostom.

CHRISTMAS DAY.

[As a Commentary is not to be obtained from the "Library of the Fathers," on the Epistle for this Holy Day, this fragment on the event which it commemorates is inserted from a Sermon of St. Leo.]

OUR beloved Saviour was born to-day: let us rejoice; for truly it is not meet that sadness should exist when it is the birthday of Life; which, the fear of death being done away, gives us abundantly the joy of a promised eternity. No one is cut off from participation in this gladness: one cause of joy is common to all,—that our Lord, the Conqueror of sin and death, although He found none free from guilt, came, as He did, to deliver us all.

Let the saint rejoice, for he draws near the prize; let the sinner rejoice, for he is invited to forgiveness; let the Gentile rejoice, for he is called to life. For the Son of God, according to the fulness of time, which the inscrutable depths of the Divine Wisdom had appointed, took upon Himself our human nature, which was to be reconciled to its Creator, that the devil, the bringer-in of death, might be vanquished by that very nature which he himself had overcome.

In which conflict, undertaken for us, the contest was according to a great and wonderful rule of fairness, for the Omnipotent God encountered His fierce enemy, clothed, not in His own Majesty, but in our meanness, exposing to the adversary the same form as ours, the same nature; a partaker of our mortality, but wholly free from sin. Different, indeed, is this birthday from all others. No one is pure from stain; not the infant whose life on earth is but a single day, therefore into this birth alone no carnal concupiscence has entered, no sin has penetrated.

A Virgin of the royal race of David is chosen, who, destined to be filled with a sacred offspring, should conceive first in her mind, and then in her body, a Child, at once Divine and human; and, lest, being ignorant of the heavenly counsels, she should be affrighted by the unwonted effect which was to be worked in her by the Holy Spirit, she is taught by the voice of an angel that the honour of her who was so soon to become the Mother of God, should be unharmed.

Let us, then, beloved, give thanks to God the Father, through His Son, by the Holy Spirit, who, according to His great mercy wherewith He loved us, had compassion on us, and though we were dead in sin, raised us to life through Christ, that we might be in Him a new creation and a new work.

Let us, then, lay aside the old man with his works, and having obtained participation in the birth of Christ, let us renounce the works of the flesh.

Learn, O Christian, thy great dignity, and, having been made partaker of the Divine nature, refuse by degenerate living to return to thy former low estate. Bear in mind of whose head and body thou art a member: recollect that having been rescued from the power of darkness, thou hast been translated into the light and kingdom of God.

THE GOSPEL.

ST. JOHN i. 1—14.

“In the beginning,” &c.

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

Why, when all the other Evangelists had begun with the dispensation^a, did John, passing by the con-

^a “Dispensation. The providential dealing of God with His creatures.”—*Hook's Church Dictionary*.

ception of Christ, His birth, His bringing up, His growth, at once discourse to us concerning His eternal generation?

I will tell you why. Because the other Evangelists had dwelt most on the account of His coming in the flesh, there was fear lest some, being of grovelling minds, might rest in these doctrines, as indeed was the case with Paul of Samosata^b. In order, therefore, to lead away from this fondness for earth those who were likely to fall into it, and to draw them up toward heaven, with good reason John commences his narrative from above, and from the eternal subsistence. For while Matthew enters upon his relation with Herod the king, Luke with Tiberius Cæsar, Mark with the baptism of John; this Apostle, leaving these things, ascends beyond all time, urging forward the imagination of his hearers to the "Was in the beginning," not allowing it to stay at any point, nor setting any limit as they did, in Herod, and Tiberius, and John.

And what we may mention besides, as especially deserving our admiration, is, that John, though he gave himself up to the higher doctrine, yet did not neglect the dispensation; nor were the others, though intent upon the relation of this, silent as to the subsistence before the ages; and this with good cause, for one spirit it was that moved the souls of all the Evangelists, and therefore their narratives exhibit great unanimity.

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God. If any one say, "What can be the reason that John has neglected the first cause, and spoken to us at once concerning the second?" we shall decline to speak of *first* and *second*, for the Deity is above number and the succession of time. Wherefore we decline the use of these expressions; but we confess,

^b "Paul of Samosata held the divine word, or reason, to be a mere attribute, and not a person. The Person of our Lord would thus be simply human, only with a divine influence."—*Note in Chrys. on Col. i. 15.*

that the Father is from none, and that the Son is begotten of the Father. "Well, then," it may be said, "why does he leave the Father, and speak concerning the Son?" Why? because the former was known to all, if not as Father, at least as God; but the Only-Begotten was not known; and therefore with reason did he immediately, from the very beginning, hasten to implant the knowledge of Him in those who knew Him not.

Besides, he has not been silent as to the Father in his writings, on these points. Observe, I beg of you, his spiritual wisdom. He knows that men most honour the eldest of beings, which was before all, and account This to be God. Wherefore from this point he makes his beginning, and, as he advances, declares that God is, and does not, like Plato assert, sometimes that He is intellect, sometimes that He is soul; for these things are far removed from that Divine and unmixed nature which has nothing in common with us, but is separated from any fellowship with created things, I mean as to substance, though not as to relation.

And for this reason he calls Him the Word. For since he is about to teach that this *Word* is the only-begotten Son of God, in order that no one may imagine that His generation is passible, he, by giving Him the appellation of *the Word*, anticipates and removes this evil suspicion, shewing that the Son is from the Father, and that without His suffering change.

Seest thou then that, as I said, he has not been silent as to the Father in his words concerning the Son? And if these instances are not sufficient to explain the whole matter, marvel not, for our subject is God, Whom it is impossible to describe, or to imagine worthily. Hence this Evangelist nowhere assigns the name of His essence, (for it is not possible to say what God is as to essence,) but everywhere he declares Him to us by His workings. For this Word we may see shortly after called *Light*, and the *Light* in turn named *Life*. He calls Him both

Light and *Life*, because He hath freely given to us the light which proceeds from knowledge, and the life which follows it. One name is not sufficient, nor two, nor three, nor more, to teach us what belongs to God. We must be content to be able, even by means of many names, to apprehend, though but obscurely, His attributes.

“And he has not called Him simply *Word*, but with the addition of the article, in this way distinguishing Him from others. Seest thou, then, that I said not without cause, that this Evangelist speaks to us from heaven? For, having set the soul of his hearers higher than all the things of sense, higher than earth, than sea, than heaven, he leads it onward above the very angels, above Cherubim and Seraphim, above thrones and principalities, and powers; in a word, he persuades it to travel beyond all created things.

What then? when he has brought us to such a height as this, is he in sooth able to stop us there? by no means; but just as one by transporting into the midst of the sea a person who was standing on the beach, looking on cities, shores and havens, removes him indeed from these objects, yet does not stay his sight anywhere, but brings him to a boundless view; so this Evangelist, having brought us above all creation, and guided us towards the eternal periods which lie beyond, leaves the sight suspended, not allowing it to arrive at any limit upwards, as indeed there is no limit.

For the intellect, having ascended to *The Beginning*, enquires what beginning; and then, finding the *was* always outstripping its imagination, has no point at which to stay its thought, but looking intently onwards, and being unable to cease at any point, it becomes wearied out, and turns back to things below. For this, *was in the beginning*, is nothing else than expressive of ever being, and being infinitely.

The first *was*, then, applied to *the Word*, is indicative of His Eternal Being (for *In the beginning*,

he saith, *was the Word*). The second *was*, (*and the Word was with God*), denotes His relative Being. Since to be eternal and without beginning is most peculiar to God, this he puts first; and then, lest any one, hearing that He was *in the beginning*, should assert that He was “unbegotten” also, He immediately remedies this by saying, before He declares what He was, that He was *with God*. And he has prevented any one from supposing that this *Word* is simply such a one as is either uttered or conceived, by the addition, as I have before said, of the article, as well as by this second expression. John does not say, was “in God,” but, was *with God*; declaring to us His eternity as to person. Then as he advances, he more clearly reveals it, by adding that this *Word* also *was God*^c.

“But yet created,” it may be said. What, then, hindered John from saying that “In the beginning God made the Word?” Moses, speaking of the earth, says, not that “In the beginning was the earth,” but that He made it, and then it was. What hindered John from saying in like manner, that, “In the beginning God made the Word.” For if Moses feared lest any one should say that the earth was uncreated, much more ought John to have feared this respecting the Son, if He was indeed created. The world being visible, by this very circumstance proclaims its Maker, (“The heavens declare the glory of God^d”); but the Son is invisible, and is greatly, infinitely higher than all creation. If, now, in the one instance, where we needed neither argument nor teaching to know that the world is created, yet the prophet sets down this fact clearly and before all others; much more should

* Many are the words of God which angels execute, but of those words none is God; they all are prophecies or commands, (for in Scripture it is usual to call the laws of God, His commands, and prophecies, His words; wherefore, in speaking of the angels, he says, mighty in strength, fulfilling His word); but this Word is a Being with subsistence, proceeding, without affection, from the Father Himself.

^d Ps. xix. 1.

John have declared the same concerning the Son, if He had indeed been created.

Moses, in the beginning of the Old Testament, speaks to us of the objects of sense, and enumerates them at length. John, hastening to ascend to the Creator Himself, passes by these things, and, by the invisible powers also whereon Moses was silent, having comprised them all in one little saying, *All things were made by Him*. And that you may not think that he merely speaks of all the things mentioned by Moses, he adds that, *without Him was not anything made that was made*. That is to say, that of created things, not one, whether it be visible or intelligible, was brought into being without the power of the Son.

Having spoken of the work of creation, John goes on to speak concerning His Providence; *In Him was Life*. That no one may question how so many and so great things were *made by Him*, he adds, that *In Him was Life*. For as with the fountain, which is the mother of the great deeps, however much you take away, you nothing lessen the fountain; so with the working power of the Only Begotten, however much you believe has been produced by it, it has become no whit the less. Or to use a more familiar example, I will instance that of Light, which the apostle himself added immediately, saying, *And the Life was the Light*. As then light, however many myriads it may enlighten, suffers no diminution of its own brightness; so also God, before commencing His work, and after completing it, remains alike indefectible, nothing diminished, nor wearied by the greatness of creation. Nay, if need were that an infinite number of such worlds should be created, He remains the same, sufficient, not only to produce, but to control them after their creation. For the word *Life* refers here, not merely to the act of creation, but also to the providence engaged in the upholding of the things created. It also lays down beforehand, the doctrine of the Resurrection, and is the beginning of these

marvellous good tidings. For when *Life* has come to be with us, the power of death is dissolved; and when *Light* has shone upon us, there is no longer darkness, but life ever abides within us, and death cannot overcome it. So that what is asserted of the Father, might be absolutely asserted of Christ also, that "In Him we live, and move, and have our being^e." As Paul has shewn when he says, "By Him were all things created, and by Him all things consist^f;" for which reason He has been called the "Root^g," and the "Foundation."

And the Life was the Light of men. He does not say, "was the Light of the Jews," but, universally, of *men*. Why did he not add, "Angels?" Because at present his discourse is concerning men, and to them he came bearing glad tidings of good things.

And the light shineth in darkness. He calls death and error darkness. Christ by enduring death hath so overcome death that He hath recovered those already holden of it. Since, then, neither error nor death overcame the Light, and since it is bright everywhere, and shines by its own strength, therefore he saith, *And the darkness comprehended it not.* For it cannot be overcome, and will not dwell in souls which desire not to be enlightened.

There was a man sent from God, whose name was John.

The Evangelist now comes to the herald of the Word, his namesake John. And now that thou hearest that he was *sent from God*, do not for the future imagine that any of the words spoken by him are mere man's words; for all that he utters is not his own but is of Him who sent him. Wherefore he is called a "messenger^h," for the excellency of a messenger is that he say nothing of his own.

The same came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light.

What is this, perhaps, some one may say, the ser-

^e Acts xvii. 28.

^f Col. i. 16, 17.

^g Isa. xi. 10; as in Rom. xv. 12.

^h Mal. iii. 1.

vant bear witness to his master? When you then see Him not only witnessed to by His servant, but even coming to him, and with Jews baptized by him, will you not be still more astonished and perplexed? Yet you ought not to be troubled nor confused, but rather amazed at such unspeakable goodness; though if any still continue bewildered and confused, He will say to such an one what He said to John, "Suffer it to be so now: for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousnessⁱ." And if any be still further troubled, again He will say to him, too, what He said to the Jews, "But I receive not testimony from man^k." If He needs not this witness, why was John sent from God? Not as though He required his testimony, this were extremest blasphemy. Why, then? John himself informs us when he says, *That all men through Him might believe.*

And Christ also, after having said, "I receive not testimony from man," in order that He may not seem to the unwise to clash with Himself, declaring at one time, "There is another that beareth witness of Me; and I know that the witness which he witnesseth of Me is true^l," (for He pointed to John); and at another, "I receive not testimony from man," He immediately adds the solution of the doubt, "But these things I say," for your sake, "that ye might be saved^m."

As then He clothed Himself with flesh, that He might not by encountering men with the unveiled Godhead, destroy them all, so He sent forth a man for His herald, that those who heard might at the hearing of a kindred voice approach the more readily. For to prove that He had no need of that herald's testimony, it would have sufficed that He should only have shewn Himself in His unveiled essence, and have confounded them all; but this He did not for the

ⁱ St. Matt. iii. 15.

^l St. John v. 32.

^k St. John v. 34.

^m St. John v. 34.

reason I have mentioned. He would have annihilated all, since none could have endured the encounter of that unapproachable light. Wherefore, as I have said, He put on flesh, and entrusted the witness of Himself to one of our fellow-servants, thus arranging all for the salvation of men, looking not to His own honour only, but also to what might be more readily received by, and be profitable to His hearers. This He glanced at when He said, "These things I say," for your sake, "that ye might be saved." And the Evangelist using the same language as his Master, after saying *to bear witness of that Light*, adds,

That all men through Him might believe. All but saying, "Think not that the reason why John the Baptist came to bear witness was that he might add aught to the trustworthiness of his Master. No; he came, that by his means beings like himself might believe." For it is clear from what follows, that he used this expression in his anxiety to remove this suspicion beforehand, since he adds,

He was not that Light.

Why, after having said that *he was sent to bear witness of that Light*, does he say, *He was not that Light*? He says it not loosely or needlessly, but because, for the most part among ourselves, the person witnessing is held to be greater, and generally more trustworthy, than the person witnessed of; therefore, that none might suspect this in the case of John, at once from the very beginning he removes the evil suspicion, and having torn it up by the roots, shews who this is that bears witness, and who He is who is witnessed of, and what an interval there is between the One witnessed of and the bearer of the witness.

That was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world.

If *He lighteth every man that cometh into the world*, how is it that so many continue unenlightened? for not all have known the majesty of Christ. How, then,

doth He *lighten every man*? He lighteth all as far as in Him lies; but if some, wilfully closing the eyes of their mind, will not receive the rays of that Light, their darkness arises not from any fault in the Light, but from their wickedness who wilfully deprive themselves of the gift. For the grace is shed forth upon all, admitting all alike, and inviting all with an equal regard. And those who are not willing to enjoy this gift, ought in justice to impute their blindness to themselves; for if when the gate is opened to all, and there is none to hinder, any being wilfully evil remain without, they perish through none other but only through themselves.

He was in the world, . . . and the world knew Him not.

The world knew Him not; but they of whom the world was not worthy, knew Him.

By *the world* he here means the multitude, which is corrupt and bound down to earthly things. For the friends and favourites of God all knew Him, even before His coming in the flesh. Concerning the Patriarch, Christ Himself speaks by name, that "Your father Abraham rejoiced to see My day: and he saw it, and was gladⁿ." And concerning David, confuting the Jews, He said, "How then doth David in spirit call Him Lord, saying, The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit Thou on My right hand^o." And in many places, disputing with them, He mentions Moses^p, and the Apostle Peter mentions the rest of the prophets.

He came unto His own, and His own received Him not. John had said, speaking of the old times, that *the world knew Him not*; afterwards he comes down in his narrative to the times of the proclamation of the Gospel, and says, *He came unto His own, and His own received Him not*, now calling the Jews *His own*, as His peculiar people, or perhaps, even all mankind as created by Him.

He came unto His own, and His own received Him not.

ⁿ St. John viii. 56.

^o St. Matt. xxii. 43, 44.

^p Acts iii. 24.

Beloved, God being loving towards man and beneficent, orders all things that we may shine in virtue, and be well approved by Him. He draws no one by force or compulsion; but by persuasion and benefits He draws all who are willing, and wins them to Himself. Wherefore, when He came, some received Him, and others received Him not. For He will have no unwilling servant, none serving by compulsion, but all of their own will and choice, and grateful to Him for allowing their service. Men, as needing the ministry of servants, keep many in that state even against their will, by the law of ownership¹; but God, not standing in need of anything of ours, but doing all only for our salvation, makes us free in this matter, and compels none who are unwilling. For He looks to our advantage only, and to be drawn unwilling to a service like this, is the same as not serving at all.

As many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the Sons of God, says the Evangelist. "Why then, O blessed one, dost thou not also tell us the punishment of them who received Him not? Thou hast said that they were *His own*, and that when *He came to His own*, they *received Him not*; but what they shall suffer for this, what punishment they shall undergo, thou hast not said. Yet so thou wouldst the more have terrified them, and have subdued the violence of their insanity, by threatening. Wherefore then, hast thou been silent?" "And what punishment," he would say, "can be greater than this, that when power is offered them to become Sons of God, they do not become so, but willingly deprive themselves of such nobility and honour?" Yet their punishment shall not even stop at this point; that they gain no good, but moreover the unquenchable fire shall receive them, as afterwards he has more plainly revealed.

Why did he not say, "He made them Sons of God,"

¹ i.e. The law of master and slave.

but that *He gave them power to become the Sons of God?* To shew that we need much zeal to preserve, without spot or soil, the image of sonship impressed on us at baptism; and at the same time to shew that no one shall be able to take this power from us, unless we first deprive ourselves of it.

Having, therefore, everywhere excluded compulsion, and pointed to man's voluntary choice and free power, he has said the same now. For even in these mystical blessings^r, it is, on the one hand, God's part to give the grace, on the other, man's part to supply faith; and in after time there needs much earnestness for what yet remains to be done. In order to preserve our purity, it is not sufficient for us merely to have been baptized, and to have believed, but we must, if we will continue to enjoy this brightness, lead a life worthy of it.

Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.

This he has said in order that, considering the vileness and the lowness of the first birth, which is *of blood and the will of the flesh*; and, perceiving the greatness and the nobleness of the second, which is by grace, we may form a high opinion of it, and one worthy of the gift of Him who hath begotten us.

And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us.

Having declared that they who received Him were *born of God*, and had become *Sons of God*, he adds the cause and reason of this unspeakable honour. It is that *the Word became flesh*, that the Master took on Him the form of a servant. For He became Son of Man, Who was God's own Son, in order that He might make the sons of men to be sons of God.

And we beheld His glory, the glory as of the Only-Begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth. Having declared that we were made *Sons of God*, and having shewn in what manner,—namely, by the *Word* having

^r i.e. Of baptism.

been *made flesh*, John mentions another advantage which we gain from this. *We beheld His glory, the glory as of the Only-Begotten of the Father*; which we could not have beheld, had it not been shewn to us by means of a body like our own. For if the men of old time could not bear to look upon the glorified countenance of even Moses, who partook of the same nature with themselves; if that just man needed a veil which might shade the purity of his glory, and shew to them the face of their prophet, mild and gentle, how could we creatures of clay and earth have endured the unveiled Godhead, which is unapproachable even by the powers above? Wherefore He tabernacled among us, that we might be able, without fear, to approach Him, speak to, and converse with Him.

What means *the glory as of the Only-Begotten of the Father*? since many of the prophets were glorified, as Moses, Elijah, and Elisha, and after them Daniel and the three children, and angels who have appeared among men, and partly disclosed to beholders the flashing light of their proper nature; and since not angels only, but even the Cherubim and Seraphim were seen by the prophet in great glory. The Evangelist, leading us away from all these, and raising our thoughts from created things, and from the brightness of our fellow-servants, sets us at the very summit of good. As if he said, for "Not of prophet, nor angel, nor archangel, nor of the higher powers, nor of any other created nature, if other there be, but of the Master Himself, the King Himself, the true Only-Begotten Son Himself, of the Very Lord of all, did we *behold the glory*."

For the word *as* does not in this place express similarity or comparison, but confirmation and unquestionable definition; as though he said, "We beheld glory, such as it was becoming that He should possess, Who is the Only-Begotten, and true Son of God, the King of all."

It behoves, therefore, those who have been deemed worthy to see and hear such things, and who have enjoyed so great a gift, to shew forth a life worthy of the doctrines, that they may enjoy also the good things which are laid up there. For our Lord Jesus Christ came, not only that we might behold His glory here, but also His glory hereafter. For therefore He saith, "I will that these also be with Me where I am, that they may behold My glory." Now if the glory here was so bright and splendid, what can one say of that which shall be hereafter? For it shall appear not on this corruptible earth, nor while we are in these perishable bodies, but in a creation which is imperishable, and which waxes not old, and with such brightness as it is not possible even to express in words. O blessed, thrice blessed, yea many times blessed, they who are deemed worthy to behold that glory! It is concerning this that the prophet says, "Let the unrighteous be taken away, that he behold not the glory of the Lord*." God grant that not one of us be taken away, or excluded from beholding it. For if we shall not hereafter enjoy it, then it is time to say of ourselves, Good were it for us if we had never been born. For why do we live and breathe? What are we, if we fail of that spectacle, if it is not granted to us then to behold our Lord?

Let us then not, by making this brief time a time of carelessness and remissness, permit ourselves to fall into everlasting punishment, but let us watch and be sober, let us make it all our business to attain to that felicity, and to keep free from that river of fire, which rushes with a loud roaring before the terrible judgment-seat. For he who has once been cast in there, must there remain for ever; there is no one to deliver him from his punishment, not father, not mother, not brother.

* Isa. xxvi. 10.

Revolving these things, then, and reflecting upon them continually, let us cleanse our life, and make it lustrous, that we may see the Lord with boldness, and obtain the promised good things; through the grace and loving-kindness of our Lord Jesus Christ, by Whom and with Whom, to the Father and the Holy Spirit, be glory for ever and ever. Amen^t.

^t St. Chrysostom.

ST. STEPHEN'S DAY.

THE EPISTLE.

Acts vii. 55—60.

“Stephen, being full of the Holy Ghost,” &c.

Stephen, being full of the Holy Ghost, looked up steadfastly into heaven, and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God, and said, Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of Man standing on the right hand of God^a. Then they cried out with a loud voice, and stopped their ears, and ran upon him with one accord.

Since Stephen had spoken of Christ's death, but had said nothing of His resurrection, he would fain now add that doctrine. And Christ appeared to him in this manner, *standing on the right hand of God*, that were it but only so, the Jews might receive Him. For since the idea of His sitting at the right hand of God was offensive to them, he for the present brings forward only what relates to His resurrection. This also is the reason why his face was glorified^b, for God being merciful, desired to make their evil designs the means of recalling them unto Himself.

And in what respect is there here matter of accusation? Yet, *they ran upon him with one accord*. Upon him,—upon the man who had wrought such miracles, the

^a In this, i.e. the glory of Christ which he now beholds, St. Chrysostom finds the cause that Stephen's face “was as it had been the face of an angel,” (Acts vi. 15); and he calls it “the glory of Moses,” Deut. xxxiv. 30.

^b God made him thus gracious of visage, now that he was about to say somewhat, thus at once by his very look to awe them. For there are, yes, there are faces full fraught with spiritual grace, lovely to them that love, awful to haters and enemies. Hom. xv.

who had prevailed over all in speech, the man could hold such discourse!

And cast him out of the city, and stoned him: and the women laid down their clothes at a young man's feet, whose name was Saul. And they stoned Stephen, calling on God, and saying, *Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.* His appeal is meant for their instruction, and to show them that he is not perishing. Again, to clear himself, and to shew that his former words were not prompted by passion, he says, *Lord, lay not this sin to their charge;* wishing, even in this way, to win them over. It was indeed a way to make his saying to be received with favour, that he should shew his own soul to be free from all passion, and that he forgave their rage in stoning him.

Peradventure the voice of the Martyr was heard for the conversion of Saul, for he was of the number of his persecutors^c.

Look at the blessed Stephen, how he rebukes the Jews, as though in rage and resentment. *Ye stiff-necked and uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye do always resist the Holy Ghost. Which of the prophets have not your fathers persecuted^d?* Thou hast heard how severe he was with his tongue, now hear how he loved. He blessed those whom he was rebuking, and was stoned by them; and as he was being overwhelmed with the blows of the stones, and bruised to death by the hands of his furious persecutors, he first said, *Lord Jesus, receive my spirit;* then, after he had prayed for himself, kneeling, he bent the knee for them who were stoning him, and said, *Lord, lay not this sin to their charge.* Let me die in my body, but let not these die in their sins; and when he had said this he fell asleep. After these words he added no more, he spake them and departed; his last prayer was for his enemies.

The Lord Christ Himself loved His enemies, for as he hung on the cross, He said, *Father, forgive them,*

^c St. Chrysostom.

^d Acts vii. 51.

for they know not what they do°. Stephen followed His example when stones were being cast at him. The servant imitated the Lord, that no one of the servants may be slow, and think that this is something which could be done by the Lord alone. If, then, it be too much for us to imitate the Lord, let us imitate our fellow-servant; for to the same grace have we all been called'.

THE GOSPEL.

ST. MATTHEW xxiii. 34—39.

“Behold, I send unto you prophets,” &c.

SEE by how many things Christ warned the Jews; He said, Ye condemn your fathers in that ye say, “We would not have been partakers with them,” and this is no little thing to shame them. He said, While ye condemn them, ye yourselves do even worse than they; and this is sufficient to cover them with disgrace. He said, “These things shall not be without punishment,” thus suggesting to them a fear unspeakable: He hath reminded them of hell. Then, because that was in the future, He brought the terrors home to them, as even present. *All these things shall come, He saith, upon this generation.*

He added also unspeakable severity to the vengeance which should come upon them, saying that they should suffer more grievous things than all others; yet did they not improve. But if any one say, And why do they suffer more grievously than others? we would answer, Because they have committed sins more grievous than theirs, and by nothing that has come upon them have they been brought to a sound mind.

And this is what God saith elsewhere; “Visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, unto the

° St. Luke xxiii. 34.

' St. Augustine.

third and fourth generation of them that hate Me.” Not as though one were to suffer punishment for the crimes committed by another, but even as one would justly deserve to suffer the same punishment, who, after seeing others sin and be punished, should commit the same offences. Indeed, he that knew many to have sinned, and was not reformed, but himself committed the same sins again; and not the same only, but also sins far more grievous, he would justly deserve to suffer a far more grievous punishment than they. For as, if he had been so minded, he might have gained greatly, had he grown better by their examples; even so, having continued without amendment, he is liable to a heavier vengeance, as having had the benefit of more warning than they.

See how appropriately He adduces the murder of Abel, indicating that those murders, like this, proceed from envy. What, then, have ye to say? Know ye not what Cain suffered? Did God hold His peace at his deeds? Did He not exact the severest penalty? Heard ye not what things your fathers suffered when they slew the prophets? Were they not delivered over to innumerable punishments? How, then, did ye not become better? and why do I speak of the punishments of your fathers, and what they suffered,—you who yourselves condemn your fathers,—how is it that you do worse than they? Moreover, ye yourselves have declared that He will miserably destroy these wicked men. What favour, then, will ye receive, who commit such crimes, after such a sentence?

Mark this. The outrage was twofold. Not only did they slay holy men, but slew them in a holy place [as Zacharias]. And speaking thus, Christ both comforted His disciples by shewing that the righteous men who were before them endured these things, and also alarmed the Jews, foretelling that like as their fathers paid their penalty, even so should they them-

• Exod. xx. 5.

selves suffer the utmost extremity. And, by saying beforehand, For this cause do *I send prophets, and wise men, and scribes*, (calling His disciples by these names), He takes away every plea from them. For "Ye cannot say," He saith, "Thou didst send to us from amongst the Gentiles, and therefore we were offended." They had no such excuse, but were led on by a murderous spirit, and a thirst for blood.

O the love of God towards man! that though He foreknows they will profit nothing, He still does His part.

Then He directs His speech unto the city, intending in this way also to rouse His hearers, and saith, *O Jerusalem, Jerusalem!* What meaneth the repetition? It is the manner of one pitying her, and bemoaning her, and greatly loving her. For like as unto a woman beloved, who had despised him who loved her, and was on the point of being punished; he pleads, being now about to inflict the punishment. And the same He doth in the Prophets also, using these words: "I said, . . . Turn thou unto Me, but she returned not^h."

Then, having called her, He tells of her blood-stained deeds. *Thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, . . . and ye would not!* In this way also pleading His own dealings. Not even by these things hast thou turned Me aside, or withdrawn Me from My great affection toward thee; but it was My desire even so, not once or twice, but often, to draw thee unto Me. For *How often would I have gathered your children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not!* This He saith, to shew that they were ever scattering themselves by their sins, and by this similitude He indicates His own great affection. For, indeed, this creature is warm in its love towards its brood, wherefore everywhere in the Prophets, in the song of Moses, and in the Psalms,

^h Jer. iii. 7.

is found this same image, indicating His protection and great care.

But ye would not, He saith. Behold, your house is left unto you desolate. Stripped of the succour which cometh from Me. Surely, it was He who before was protecting them, and preserving them, and holding them together; surely it was He who was ever chastening them; and now He appoints a punishment which they had ever dreaded exceedingly, even the entire overthrow of their polity.

I say unto you, Ye shall not see Me henceforth, till ye shall say, Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord. This is the language of One that loves earnestly, earnestly drawing them unto Him by the things to come. For not merely does He warn them by the past, but also He speaks of the day of His second coming.

Because they were constantly accusing Him of being a kind of rival God, and foe to God, He moves them to love Him, by shewing Himself to be of one accord with His Father; and He indicates Himself to be the same that was in the prophets, using the same words as the prophets used.

And by these words He intimated both His resurrection and His second coming, and made it plain even to the utterly unbelieving, that then they should most surely worship Him. And how did He make this plain? By speaking of many things that were to be first. That He should send prophets, that they should kill them, that it should be in the synagogues, that they should suffer the utmost extremities, that their house should be left desolate, that they should undergo most grievous tribulations such as had never been before. All these things are enough to furnish, even to the most insensible and contentious, a clear proof of that which should come to pass at His second coming.

For, I will ask them, Did He send the prophets and wise men? Did they slay them in their synagogues?

Was their house left desolate? Did all the vengeance come upon that generation? It is quite plain that it was so, and no man gainsays it. As, then, all these things came to pass, so shall these also come to pass, and most surely shall they then submit.

But then they shall derive from their submission no advantage in the way of defence; as neither will they who only in the day of judgment repent of their evil life.

Wherefore let us, while it is time, do that which is good. For like as they hereafter will derive no advantage from their knowledge, even so neither shall we from our too late repentance. Neither to the pilot, when the bark is sunk in the sea through his remissness, will hope remain; nor to the physician when the sick man is gone; each must, before the end come, do all that may be done. Afterwards all is unprofitable¹.

¹ St. Chrysostom.

ST. JOHN THE EVANGELIST'S DAY.

THE EPISTLE.

1 ST. JOHN i. 1—10.

“That which was from the beginning.”

That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, and our hands have handled, of the Word of Life.

Who is he that with hands can handle the Word, except in that “The Word was made flesh and dwelt among us?” Now this Word, that was made flesh so that it might be handled, began to be flesh of the Virgin Mary; but not then began to be the Word, for the Apostle saith, *That which was from the beginning.* See whether his epistle does not bear witness to his gospel, where it saith, “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God^a.” See what follows: *For the Life was manifested.* Christ, therefore, is the “Word of Life.” And how manifested? For it was *from the beginning*, but not manifested to men. Well, then, *The Life was manifested* in the flesh, because it depended on this manifestation, that That which could be seen by the heart only, should be seen by the eyes also, that It might heal the heart. For only by the heart is the Word seen: but the flesh is seen by the bodily eyes also. We had that wherewith to see the flesh, but had not that wherewith to see the Word; and the “Word was made flesh,” which we could see with our eyes, that so our heart should be healed, wherewith thereafter we might see the Word.

And we have seen it and bear witness, and shew unto you that eternal life, which was with the Father, and was

^a St. John i. 1.

manifested unto us; that which we have seen and heard declare we unto you.

Those saw the Lord Himself present in the flesh, and heard words from the mouth of the Lord, and told them to us. Consequently we also have heard, but have not seen. Are we, then, less happy than those who saw and heard? And how does he add, *That ye also may have fellowship with us?* Those saw, we have not seen, and yet we are fellows, because we hold the faith in common. For there was one who did not believe, even upon seeing, and would needs handle, and so believe, and said, "I will not believe, except I thrust my finger into the print of the nails, and thrust my hand into His side^b." He did give Himself for a time to be handled by the hands of men, who always giveth Himself to be seen by the sight of the angels; and that disciple did handle, and exclaimed, "My Lord, and my God!" Because he touched the Man, he confessed the God. And the Lord, to console us, who, now that He sitteth in heaven, cannot touch Him with the hand, but only reach Him by faith, said to him, "Because thou hast seen Me thou hast believed: blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed^c." We are here described,—we are pointed out. Then let that blessedness take place in us, of which the Lord predicted that it should take place; let us firmly hold that which we see not, because those tell us who have seen. *That ye also, saith he, may have fellowship with us.* But what great matter is it to have fellowship with men? Do not despise it; see what he adds: *And truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ. And these things, saith he, we write unto you, that your joy may be full.* Full joy he means in that fellowship, in that charity, in that unity.

This, then, is the message which we have heard of Him, and declare unto you, that God is Light, and in Him is no

^b St. John xx. 25.

^c St. John xx. 29.

darkness at all. Why, who would dare to say that there is darkness in God? Or, what is light? or what darkness? Speaks he of such things as pertain to these eyes of ours? When he saith, *God is Light*, some man saith, "The sun also is light, and the moon also is light, and a candle is light." This light must be something far greater than these, far more excellent. As far as God is distant from the creature, the Maker from the thing made, the Wisdom from that which is made by Wisdom; so far beyond all things must this Light needs be. And haply we shall be near to It, if we get to know what It is, and apply ourselves unto It, that by It we may be enlightened; because in ourselves we are darkness, and only when enlightened by It can we become light, and being put to confusion by ourselves, be not put to confusion by the light. Who is he that is put to confusion by himself? He that knows himself to be a sinner. Who is he that by the Light is not put to confusion? He who by It is enlightened. He, who now sees himself to be darkened by sins, and desires to be enlightened by It, draws near to It, and is enlightened,—as saith the Psalm, "Draw near unto Him and be ye enlightened, and your faces shall not be ashamed^d." Thou shalt not be ashamed by It, if, when It shall shew thee to thyself, that thou art foul, thy foulness shall so displease thee, that thou mayst perceive Its beauty. This it is that John would teach.

And may it be that we are over hasty in saying this? Let the Apostle himself make this plain in what follows. Remember what was said at the outset of our discourse^e, that the present epistle commendeth charity. *God is Light*, saith he, *and in Him is no darkness at all.* And what said he above? *That ye may*

^d Ps. xxxiv. 5, LXX.

^e In this Epistle, Charity is above all commended. He has spoken many words, and nearly all are about charity.—(Prologue to the Commentary on the 1st Epistle of St. John.)

have fellowship with us; and our fellowship is with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ. If, then, God be Light, and in Him is no darkness at all, and we must have fellowship with Him, then must the darkness be driven away from us, that there may be light in us, for darkness cannot have fellowship with light. To this end see what follows: *If we say that we have fellowship with Him, and walk in darkness, we lie.*

Thou hast also the Apostle Paul saying, "Or what fellowship hath light with darkness?"¹ Thou walkest in darkness, and *God is light, and in Him is no darkness at all.* How, then, can there be fellowship? At this point, therefore, a man may say to himself, What shall I do? How shall I be light? I live in sin and iniquity. There steals upon him, as it were, a sadness and despair. There is no salvation, save in the fellowship of God. *God is Light, and in Him is no darkness at all.* But sins are darkness, as the Apostle saith of the devil and his angels, that they are rulers of darkness, calling them rulers of darkness as rulers of sins, having lordship over the wicked. Then what do we, my brethren? Fellowship with God must be had, other hope of life eternal is none; we are pressed down by sins, so that we cannot have fellowship with God. What hope have we then? What shall become of us? Let us hear whether peradventure He will console, lift up, give hope, that we faint not by the way. For we are running, and running to our own country, and if we despair of attaining, of very despair we fail. But He whose will it is that we attain, that He may lead us safe to our own land, feedeth us in the way. Hear we then. *If we say that we have fellowship with Him and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth.* Let us not say that we have fellowship with Him, if we walk in darkness. *If we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship one with another.* Let us walk in the light as He is in the light, that

¹ 2 Cor. vi. 14; Communion, E.V.

^s Eph. vi. 12.

we may be able to have fellowship with Him. And what are we to do about our sins? Hear what follows: *And the Blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin.* Great assurance hath God given! Well may we celebrate the Passover wherein was shed the Blood of the Lord, by which we are cleansed from all sin^b. Let us be assured; the handwriting which was against us, the bond of our slavery the devil held, but by the Blood of Christ it is blotted out. The Blood, saith He, of His Son shall purge us from all sin. What meaneth from all sin? Mark, Lo! even now in the name of Christ, whom here these have now confessed, who are called infants, have all their sins been cleansedⁱ. They came in old and they went out new. The new life is the infancy of regeneration. Past sins [i.e. sins before baptism] have been pardoned, not only to these but to us; but after this pardon and abolition of all sins, haply new sins have been contracted by living in this world, in the midst of temptation. What, then, in such case is to be done? Let a man confess himself to be what he is, that he may be cured by Him who is the same for ever and ever.

Lest, however, the Apostle should seem to have given impunity to sin, in that he said, *He is faithful and just to forgive us our sin, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness*; and men should henceforth say to themselves, "Let us sin, let us do securely what we will, Christ cleanseth us, He is faithful and just, and cleanseth us from all iniquity:" this evil security is taken away, and useful fear is substituted. To thine own heart thou wouldst be secure, then must thou be vigilant. *For He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins*, provided we be displeased with them ourselves, and be still going on unto perfection. Accordingly, what follows? "My little children, these things I write unto you, that ye sin not." But, perchance

^b This sermon seems to have been preached in the season of Easter.

ⁱ The newly-baptized Neophytes.

sin overtakes us, and what shall be done then? What! shall there now be despair? Hearken! "And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the Righteous, and He is the Propitiation for our sins^k." He, then, is the Advocate. Do thine endeavour not to sin. If, from the infirmity of the flesh sin shall overtake thee, see to it straightway; straightway be grieved, straightway confess, and straightway condemn it; and when thou hast condemned it, thou shalt come assured unto the Judge. There hast thou the Advocate. Fear not to lose thy cause in thy confession. Ofttimes in this life a man commits his cause to an eloquent tongue and is not lost, and shalt thou be lost who committest thyself to the Word? "We have an Advocate with the Father^l."

The most blessed Apostle John, writing healthfully and truly, saith among other things, *If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.* In these words the blessed John, yea, rather the Lord Jesus Himself, breaking silence by John, hath taught us, that no one in this flesh, in this corruptible body, in this evil world, in this life full of temptations,—that no one liveth here without sin. It is a sentence complete in itself, and wants no exposition. *If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.* For who is there that hath no sin? As Scripture saith, not even the infant, "whose life is but of one day upon the earth^m." Such an infant hath not himself committed sin, but from his parents hath derived it. In no way, therefore, can any one say that he hath not had sin. But the faithful man hath by faith approached the laver of regeneration, and all has been forgiven him; at once he lives under grace, he lives in faith, he has been made a member of Christ, has been

^k 1 St. John xi. 12.

^l St. Augustine on 1 St. John i., &c.

^m Job xiv. 5, Sept.

made a temple of God, and yet so, as he has been made a member of Christ, and a temple of God, if he shall say that he hath no sin, he deceiveth himself, and the truth is not in him. He lies entirely if he says, "I am righteous."

But there are some inflated skins, full of the spirit of elation, not great in solid size, but so swollen with the disease of pride, that they dare to say that men are found without sin. They say, that the righteous have in this life no sin at all. And when the answer is made to them, What is that which you say? Does man live here without sin? hath he no sin at all? neither in deed, nor in word, nor in thought? They answer out of that wind of pride, wherewith they are full; Decidedly those holy, faithful men of God cannot have any sin, either in deed, or word, or thought. And when it is asked them, Who are these righteous men who are without sin? They answer and say, The whole Church. I might well wonder if I should find one, two, three, ten, as many as Abraham sought for. For Abraham went down from fifty to ten. Thou heretic makest answer and sayest to me, "The whole Church!" Whence knowest thou this? prove, I pray thee, for great joy dost thou bring me if thou canst teach me that the whole Church in all her several faithful ones hath no sin. I prove it, you say. Tell me whence. The Apostle saith, "Christ loved the Church, and gave Himself for it; that He might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the Word, that He might present it to Himself a glorious Church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing^a." But tell us before we search in what sense the Apostle spake these words, tell us, I say, whether ye are righteous or not. They answer, We are righteous. Have ye then no sin? The livelong day, the livelong night, do ye no evil? say ye no evil? think ye no evil? They dare not say, None. But what do they answer? It is true we are

^a Eph. v. 25-7.

sinners, but we are speaking of saints, not of ourselves. I ask ye this, Are ye Christians? I do not say, Are ye righteous? Are ye Christians? They dare not deny it. We are Christians, they say. Are ye, then, the faithful? Have ye been baptized? We have been baptized, they say. Were all your sins forgiven you? Forgiven, say they. How then are ye sinners? This is enough for me to refute you by. You are Christians, you are baptized, you are the faithful, you are members of the Church, and you have spots and wrinkles. How then is the Church in this time present without spot and wrinkle? when ye are her wrinkles and spot? Or if ye would have none to be the Church but that which is without spot and wrinkle, cut yourselves off with your wrinkles and spots from her members, cut yourselves off from her body. But why should I bid them separate themselves from the Church, when they have done this already. For they are heretics, they are without already. With all their purity they have remained without. Return ye and hear, hear ye and believe.

Peradventure you will say, Could we say that we are righteous? It was necessary, of course, that we should say we are sinners, for humility's sake. Dost thou then lie for humility's sake? John did not say, If we say that we have no sin, humility is not in us; but he said, *If we say that we have no sin, the truth is not in us.* Thou art a false witness against thyself, God doth not accept thy lying humility.

And now let us leave John's words. Behold in the body of the Church,—which thou dost say hath neither spot nor wrinkle, nor any such thing, and is without sin,—behold, the hour of prayer will come, the whole Church will be at prayer, and thou, it is true, not without; come to the Lord's Prayer, come to the scale, come, say, "Our Father, Which art in Heaven." Go on,—*"Hallowed be Thy Name. Thy Kingdom come. Thy will be done as in heaven, so in earth. Give*

us this day our daily bread." Go on, and say, "Forgive us our debts." Answer, heretic, what are thy debts? Hast thou received money in loan from God? Thou sayest, No. I will not ask thee further upon this, for the Lord Himself will explain what are the debts which we pray to have remitted to us. Let us repeat what follows: "As we forgive our debtors." Let the Lord expound this. "For if ye forgive men their sins^o," (therefore your debts are sins), "your heavenly Father will also forgive you." Return then, heretic, to prayer, if thou art become deaf to the true principles of faith. Sayest thou, or dost thou not say, "Forgive us our debts?" If thou dost not, though thou shouldst be present in body, thou art yet outside the Church. For it is the Church's prayer, it is the voice which comes from the teaching of the Lord. He said, "Thus pray ye." To the disciples He said, "Thus pray ye:" To the disciples He said, to the Apostles He said, and to little lambs, how feeble soever, He saith, to the rams of the flock He saith, "Thus pray ye." Consider ye who said it, and to whom He said it. The Truth to His disciples, the Shepherd of shepherds to the rams. "Thus pray ye, Forgive us our debts as we also forgive our debtors."

I ask thee, thou righteous, holy man, man without spot or wrinkle, I ask thee, I say, is this the prayer of the Church, of the faithful, or of the Catechumens? It is certainly that of the regenerate, that is, of the baptized. In fine, what surpasses all, it is the prayer of sons. For, if it be not, with what face is said, "Our Father, Which art in Heaven^p."

If, then, the whole Church saith, Forgive us our debts, he is a reprobate who saith it not.

Lo, the whole Church saith, Forgive us our debts. It hath, then, spots and wrinkles, but by confession the wrinkle is smoothed out, and by confession the spot

^o E. V., Trespasses.

^p See Note in Epistle for the Sunday after Christmas Day.

is wiped away. The Church standeth in prayer, that she may be cleansed by confession, and so long as this life lasts, so long she standeth. And when each one leaves the body, all the debts he had of such a kind as needed forgiveness are forgiven him, because they are forgiven even by daily prayer, and then he leaves the world cleansed, and the Church is laid up among the Lord's treasures, pure gold. Thus, amid the Lord's treasures, the Church is without spot or wrinkle.

The Church on earth confesseth that she hath debts to be remitted. They who do not confess it, have not on that account none, but on that account they will not be remitted them. Confession healeth us, and a guarded life, a humble life, prayer with faith, contrition of heart, unfeigned tears flowing forth from the fountain of the heart, that the sins may be forgiven us, without which we cannot live. Confession, I say, healeth us, as saith the Apostle John: *If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness* ¹.

THE GOSPEL.

ST. JOHN xxi. 19—25.

“Jesus said unto Peter, Follow Me.”

Jesus said unto Peter, Follow Me. Then Peter, turning about, seeth the disciple whom Jesus loved, following; which also leaned on His breast at supper, and said, Lord, which is he that betrayeth Thee? Peter seeing him, saith to Jesus, Lord, and what shall this man do?

Wherefore hath the Apostle reminded us of that reclining? Not without cause, or by chance, but to shew what boldness Peter had after the denial. For he, who then did not dare to question Jesus, but committed that office to another, was now entrusted with the chief authority over the brethren, and not only doth not com-

¹ St. Augustine on N. T., Ser. 131.

mit to another that which concerns himself, but himself puts a question to his Master concerning another. John is silent, and Peter speaks. He also sheweth in this the love he bare towards him, for Peter greatly loved John, as is clear from what followed, and their close union is shewn throughout the whole Gospel, and in the Acts. When, then, Christ had foretold great things to Peter, and had committed the world to him, and had foretold his martyrdom, and had testified that his love was greater than that of the others, then he, desiring to have John also to share with him, saith, *And what shall this man do?* Shall he not come the same way with us? And as at that other time, not able himself to ask, he put John forward, so now, supposing John could desire to ask concerning himself, but had not courage, he took the questioning upon himself. What, then, saith Christ?

If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee?

Since Peter spake from strong affection, wishing not to be torn away from John, Christ, to shew that however much he might love he could not go beyond His love, saith, *If I will that he tarry, . . . what is that to thee?* teaching us by these words not to be impatient, nor curious beyond what seemeth good to Him. Peter was ever hot, and eager in such enquiries as these; and He saith this, checking his warmth, and teaching him not to enquire further.

Then went this saying abroad among the brethren, that that disciple should not die; yet Jesus said not unto him, He shall not die; but, If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee?

As if He said, "Do not suppose that I order all things concerning you after a single rule." And this He did to withdraw them from their unseasonable sympathy for each other; for as they were now to receive the charge of the whole world, it was necessary that they should no longer be closely associated together, which would have been a great loss to the world. Wherefore Christ said,

“Thou hast a work entrusted to thee, look to it, labour, struggle, accomplish it. What if I will that he tarry here? look thou to thine own concerns.” Observe, I pray thee, the absence of pride in the Evangelist, that, having mentioned the opinions of the disciples, he asserts it, saying that, *Jesus said not that he shall not die, but, If I will that he tarry.*

This is that Disciple which testifieth of these things, and wrote these things, and we know that his testimony is true.

What the other Apostles, when they preached, declared, John also saith, “We are His witnesses of these things; so is also the Holy Ghost, whom God hath given to them that obey Him^r.” And besides, John was present at all, and did not desert Christ even when being crucified, and had His Mother entrusted to him; all of which are signs of his love for Him, and of his exact knowledge of all these things.

And there are also many other things which Jesus did, the which, if they should be written every one, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that should be written.

Marvel not that so many miracles have taken place, but, considering the ineffable power of the Doer, receive with faith what is here spoken.

But why went not the Evangelist through them all? Chiefly on account of their number; besides, they also considered that he who believed not those they had mentioned, would not give heed to a greater number; while he who received these, would have no need of more, in order to believe^s.

^r Acts v. 32.

^s St. Chrysostom.

THE INNOCENTS' DAY^a.

THE GOSPEL.

ST. MATTHEW ii. 13—18.

“The Angel of the Lord,” &c.

The Angel of the Lord appeareth to Joseph in a dream, saying, Arise, and take the young Child and His mother, and flee into Egypt.

There is something here worth enquiring into, both as touching the Magi, and as touching the Child. If they were not troubled, but received all things in faith, why were not they and the young Child preserved remaining there, but compelled to go as fugitives, they into Persia, He with His mother into Egypt? But, it may be said, might not the Child have fallen into the hands of Herod, and though within his power, yet not have been cut off? Nay, in such a case He would not have been thought to have taken flesh upon Him; the greatness of the œconomy^b would not have been believed. He must needs flee and withdraw Himself as any man might; the working of miracles not as yet being seasonable. For if from His earliest infancy He had shewn forth wonders, He would not have been accounted a man. If even whilst these things are taking place, and many circumstances are being mysteriously ordered in a natural manner, some have dared to say that His assumption of our flesh is a fable, in what depth of impiety would not they have been lost, if He had done all things in a manner becoming His Godhead, and according to the fulness of His power. “But wherefore then,” may it be asked, “were any signs

^a There is no Commentary on Revelation in the “Library of the Fathers.”

^b Or Dispensation; see note, p. 47.

wrought at the beginning?" For His mother's sake, for the sake of Joseph, and of Simeon who was presently to depart; for the sake of the shepherds and the wise men; for the sake of the Jews. These, had they been willing carefully to observe what was taking place, would even from the flight into Egypt have reaped no small advantage in regard to what was to come.

And why is the young Child sent into Egypt? The Evangelist himself hath declared the cause, saying, *That it might be fulfilled, Out of Egypt have I called My Son.* The beginnings of fair hopes were thus proclaimed to the world. For since Babylon and Egypt most of all countries were burning in the flame of ungodliness, He signified from the first that He would correct and amend both, sending the wise men to the one, while with His mother He Himself visited the other, thus leading men to expect His mercies towards all the world.

The angel having appeared, talks not with Mary, but with Joseph. *Arise, and take the young Child, and His Mother.* He no longer says, *thy wife*, but *His Mother*. For after the birth had taken place, and suspicion was removed, and the husband was appeased, thenceforth the angel speaks openly, calling neither wife nor Child Joseph's. And He gives the reason for their flight; *For Herod, saith he, will seek the young Child to destroy Him.*

Joseph when he heard these things was not offended, neither did he say, "The thing is hard to understand:" Didst thou not say that He should "save His people?" and now He does not even save Himself, but He must flee from hence, and be long absent; the facts are contrary to the promise! Nay, none of these things did Joseph say, for he was faithful, neither was he curious about the time of his return, although the angel had spoken indefinitely: *Be thou there until I bring thee*

rd. He submits and obeys, undergoing all the trial
th joy.

If the Jews should raise a question touching the
ophecy, and say that the words, *Out of Egypt have
called My Son*, were uttered concerning themselves;
would tell them, it is a law of prophecy, that in
any cases, that which is spoken of one set of persons
fulfilled in another: thus, concerning Simeon and
vi, it is said, "I will divide them in Jacob, and scat-
r them in Israel^d," and yet not upon themselves did
is come to pass, but upon their descendants; again,
ah's saying concerning Canaan^e, came to pass upon
e Gibeonites, the descendants of Canaan; the bless-
g of Jacob also, "Be lord over thy brethren, and
thy mother's sons bow down to thee^f," had no ac-
mplishment in Jacob, (how could it, he being in fear
d trembling, and over and over again bowing down
fore his brother^g?) but in his descendants it was ac-
mplished. The same may be said in this case also;
r which is most truly the Son of God; he who wor-
ips a calf, and is joined to Baal-peor, and sacrifices
s sons to devils? or he that is a son by nature, and
nours him that begat him? So that, unless this Man
d come, the prophecy would not have received its
e fulfilment. It is worth observing that the Evan-
list intimates this by the phrase, *that it might be ful-
led*; implying that it would not have been fulfilled
less He had gone into Egypt.

*Then Herod, when he saw that he was mocked of the
se men, was exceeding wroth.* Yet surely it was not
case for anger, but for fear and awe: he ought to
ve perceived that he was attempting impossible
ings. Yet is he not restrained. For when a soul
insensible and incurable, it yields to none of the
edicines given by God. See as an example this
an, following up his former evil deeds, and adding

^d Gen. xlix. 7.

^f Gen. xxvii. 29.

^e Gen. ix. 25.

^g Gen. xxxiii. 3.

many murders to one, and hurried down the steep not caring whither. Driven wild by anger and jealousy, as by some demon, he takes account of nothing, but rages against nature herself; his anger against the wise men who had mocked him he vents upon the children who had done him no wrong; venturing, then, in Palestine upon a deed akin to that which had been done of old in Egypt. For he *sent forth, and slew all the children that were in Bethlehem, and in all the coasts thereof, from two years old and under, according to the time which he had diligently enquired of the wise men.*

Here attend to me carefully, because many things are idly spoken touching these children, and the ruling of events is charged with injustice, and, while some express their perplexity in moderate terms, others speak with violence and audacity. In order, then, that we may deliver these from their madness, and those from their perplexity, suffer me to discourse a little upon this topic.

If this be their complaint, that the children were left to be slain, it is clear that they should find fault likewise with the slaughter of the soldiers that kept Peter^h. For as here, when the young Child had fled, other children are massacred in the place of Him who was sought; even so, when Peter was delivered by the angel from his chains and prison, one of like name and temper with this tyrant, when he had sought for the Apostle and found him not, slew in his place the soldiers that kept him. "But what is this?" it may be said; "It is not a solution, but an enhancement of our difficulty." I know it, and with this intent I bring forward such cases, that to all I may give one and the same solution. What, then, is the solution, or what fair account can we give of these things? That Christ was not the cause of the slaughter of the children, but the king's cruelty. As, indeed, neither was Peter the cause in the other case, but the madness of Herod. For if

^h Acts xii. 19.

Herod had seen the wall broken through, or the doors overthrown, he might perhaps have had ground to accuse of negligence the soldiers that kept the Apostle; but now when all things remained in due order, and the doors were thrown open, the chains remaining fastened to the hands of them that kept him, (for in fact they had been bound unto him,) he might have inferred from these things, (that is, if he had been strictly doing a judge's office on the matters before him,) that the event was not of human power or craft, but of some divine and wonder-working power; he might have adored the Doer of these things, instead of waging war against the sentinels. For God had so ordered all things, that, so far from exposing the keepers, He was by their means leading the king unto the truth. He proved insensible; but how can the insubordination of him that is diseased bring reproach upon the skilful Physician of souls who orders all things to a good end?

The same may be said likewise in the present case. Wherefore art thou wroth, O Herod, at being mocked of the wise men? Didst thou not know that the birth was divine? Didst thou not summon the chief priests? Didst thou not gather together the scribes? Did not they, being called, bring with them the prophet of old into thy hall of judgment, proclaiming these things beforehand¹? Didst thou not see how the old things agreed with the new? Didst thou not hear that a star ministered unto these men? Didst thou not reverence the zeal of the barbarians? didst thou not marvel at their boldness? Wast not thou struck with awe at the truth of the prophecy? didst thou not from the former things understand the very latest also? Wherefore didst thou not reason with thyself from all these things, that this event was not of the craft of the wise men, but was from a Divine power, duly ordering all? And even if thou wast deceived by the wise men, what

¹ See the Gospel for Epiphany.

is that to the young children, who have done no wrong? "Yea," saith one, "Herod hast thou full well deprived of excuse, and proved him blood-thirsty, but thou hast not yet solved the question as to the injustice of what took place. For if he acted unjustly, why did God permit it?" Now what can we say to this? That which I do not cease to say continually in the church, in the market-place, everywhere; that which I also wish you carefully to keep in mind, for it is a rule suited to every such perplexity. Although there be many that injure, yet is there not so much as one that is injured. They who are wronged are not wronged, if they bear nobly all that they suffer; yea, rather, they gain abundantly, whether they be smitten of God, or scourged of the devil.

Wherein, then, were the young children hurt in being slain for such a cause, and borne away speedily into that waveless harbour? "In that they would," sayest thou, "in many instances have achieved great deeds of goodness." Why? for this very cause He lays up for them, beforehand, no small reward,—the ending of their lives in such a cause. Besides, if the children were to have been any great persons, He would not have suffered them to be snatched away beforehand. For if they that will eventually live in continual wickedness are endured by Him with so great long-suffering, much more would He have preserved these from being so cut off, had He foreknown that they would accomplish any great things.

These are the reasons we have to give. Yet are they not all; but there are others more mysterious than these, which He knoweth perfectly who Himself ordereth these things. Let us, then, give up to Him the more perfect understanding of this matter, and apply ourselves to what follows, learning, in the calamities of others, to bear with courage our own sufferings. Yea, for it was no little scene of woe which Bethlehem beheld when the children were snatched from

their mothers' breasts, and dragged unto this unjust slaughter.

Then was fulfilled that which was spoken by Jeremy the prophet, saying, In Rama was there a voice heard, lamentation, and weeping, and great mourning, Rachel weeping for her children, and would not be comforted, because they are not.

Having been filled with horror by these things,—the slaughter, so violent and unjust, so cruel and lawless,—the hearer is now comforted again by this reflection: that not from any ignorance on the part of God, nor from any want of power in Him, did all this take place, but He had both known and foretold it, and that loudly, by His prophet. Be not troubled then, neither despond, but look unto His unsearchable Providence, which may be most clearly seen both by what He works, and by what He permits. And this He intimates in another place also, when discoursing with His disciples. Having forewarned them of the judgment-seats, and executions, and wars of the world, and of the battle that knows no truce; to uphold their spirits and to comfort them, He saith, “Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? and one of them shall not fall on the ground without your Father^k.” These things, He said, signifying that nothing is done without His knowledge; but while He knows all, yet not in all doth He act. “Be not then troubled,” He saith, “neither be disturbed.” For if He knows what ye suffer, and hath power to hinder it, it is quite clear that it is in His Providence and care for you that He doth not hinder it. This we ought to bear in mind in our own trials, and great will be the consolation we shall thence receive^l.

^k Matt. x. 29.

^l St. Chrysostom.

THE SUNDAY AFTER CHRISTMAS DAY.

THE EPISTLE.

GALATIANS iv. 1—7.

“ Now I say, that the heir, as long as he is a child,” &c.

Now I say, that the heir, as long as he is a child, differeth nothing from a servant, though he be lord of all; but is under tutors and governours, until the time appointed of the father. Even so we, when we were children, were in bondage under the elements of the world.

The word *children* in this place refers not to age, but understanding; the meaning is, that God had from the beginning designed for us these gifts, but as we yet continued childish, He suffered us to be under the elements of the world, that is, new moons and sabbaths, for these days are regulated by the course of sun and moon. Now those who would bring you under the Law, act just as if, when you are come to full age, they were to draw you back to past years of childhood. And see what is the consequence of these observances; the lord, the master of the house, is thereby reduced to the rank of a servant.

But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth His Son, made of a woman, made under the Law, to redeem them that were under the Law, that we might receive the adoption of sons.

Here he states two objects and effects of the Incarnation, which none could compass but Christ,—deliverance from evil, and supply of good; deliverance from the curse of the Law, and promotion to Sonship. Fitly does he say, *that we might receive*^a, implying that it was

^a Lit. be paid.

due: for the promise of these things was of old times made to Abraham, as the Apostle hath elsewhere shewn at great length. And how doth it appear that we have become sons? He has told us one way, in that we have put on Christ, who is the very Son; and now he mentions another, in that we have received the Spirit of Adoption.

And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father. Wherefore thou art no more a servant, but a son; and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ.

Had we not been first made sons, we could not have called Him Father. If, then, grace hath made us free-men instead of slaves; men, instead of children; heirs and sons, instead of aliens,—is it not utter stupidity to desert this grace and to turn back ^b?

God hath sent the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father. That is, making you cry, for it is we that cry; but in Him, that is, by His shedding abroad love in our hearts, without which, whoso crieth crieth in vain; whence Paul says, “If any man have not the Spirit of Christ ^c, he is none of His ^d.”

What, then, it may be said, “And did not they [the Jews] call God Father?” Wilt thou not hear Moses when he says, “Thou desertedst the God that begat thee ^e.” Wilt thou not hear Malachi reproaching them, and saying that “one God formed us, and there is one Father of us all ^f.” Still, though these words and others besides are used, we do not anywhere find them calling God by the name of Father, or praying in this language ^g. But we all, Priests and Laymen,

^b St. Chrysostom.

^c Rom. viii. 9.

^d St. Aug., Hom., N. T.

^e Deut. xxxii. 15, LXX.

^f Malachi ii. 10.

^g In the Primitive Church, none but the baptized were allowed to use the Lord's Prayer. “The catechumens were not allowed to say, ‘Our Father,’ till they had first made themselves sons by regeneration in the waters of Baptism.” See Bingham, Ant., vol. i. p. 37, and elsewhere; St. Chrysostom in several places, St. Augustine (see Epistle for St. John the Evangelist's Day), and others.

rulers and ruled, are ordered thus to pray. And this is the first language we give utterance to after our spiritual birth. If in any other instances they so called Him, that was only of their own mind; but those in the state of grace do it through being moved by the inworking of the Spirit. For as there is a Spirit of Wisdom, after which they that were unwise became wise, and this discloses itself in their teaching; and a Spirit of Power, whereby the feeble raised up the dead and drove out devils; a Spirit also of the Gift of Healing, and a Spirit of Prophecy, and a Spirit of Tongues, so also a Spirit of Adoption. And as we know the Spirit of Prophecy, in that he who hath it, foretold things to come, not speaking of his own mind, but moved by grace; so, too, is the Spirit of Adoption, whereby he that is gifted with it calleth God Father, as moved by the Spirit. But Paul, wishing to express a true descent, used also the word in the Hebrew tongue, for he does not only say, Father, but, Abba, Father, which name is a special sign of true-born children of their Father^h.

THE GOSPEL.

ST. MATTHEW i. 18—25.

“The birth of Jesus Christ was,” &c.

The birth of Jesus Christ was on this wise: When as His mother Mary was espoused to Joseph, before they came together she was found with child of the Holy Ghost. Then Joseph her husband being a just man, and not willing to make her a publick example, was minded to put her away privily.

By a just man is meant in this place one who is virtuous in all things, for both freedom from covetous-

^h St. Chrysostom, Hom., Rom. viii. 15.

ness is justice, and also general virtue is justice, and it is mostly in this latter sense that the Scripture uses the word. Being then *just*, that is, good and considerate, he *was minded to put her away privily*. The Evangelist tells what took place before Joseph was fully informed, to the intent that thou mightest not mistrust what was done after that.

Moreover, such an one was not only liable to be made a public example, but the Law commanded that she should also be punished. Now Joseph remitted not that greater punishment only, but also the less, namely, the disgrace. Seest thou not here a man under self-control, and free from the most tyrannical of passions? for ye know how great a passion is jealousy. He to whom all these things were clearly known, said, "Jealousy is the rage of a man: therefore he will not spare in the day of vengeanceⁱ;" and, "Jealousy is cruel as the grave^k." Nevertheless, Joseph was so free from this passion, that he was unwilling even in the least matter to grieve the Virgin. Therefore, whereas to keep her in his house seemed like a transgression of the Law, but to expose her and bring her to trial would constrain him to deliver her up to death, he doeth neither of these things, but conducts himself by a higher rule than the Law. Grace being come, there must needs henceforth be many tokens of that exalted citizenship. Even as the sun, though as yet he shew not his beams, doth from afar by his light illumine more than half the world; so likewise Christ, even before He came forth from that womb, shone over all the world.

And now, things being in this state, the angel comes to solve all difficulties. But why did not the angel speak sooner, before the husband had such thoughts? For, when *he thought on these things*, and not until then, the angel came. And yet to Mary he declared the good tidings, even before she conceived. For what

ⁱ Prov. vi. 34.

^k Cant. viii. 6.

reason, then, did he not speak before Joseph became troubled? Lest he should be unbelieving, and the same happen unto him as to Zacharias, the angel spake not at the first. Belief was easy when the thing had become visible, but beforehand it would not have been equally easy to receive the saying.

He comes, then, when Joseph is troubled; and in addition to the cause already mentioned, he defers his coming with a view to the manifestation of Joseph's self-command. But when the event is on the point of taking place, then at last he presents himself. *While he thought on these things, behold, the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a dream.*

And why not openly, as to the shepherds, and to Zacharias, and to the Virgin? The man was exceedingly full of faith, and needed not an open vision. Whereas the Virgin—as having declared to her very exceeding good tidings, greater than to Zacharias, and this before the event—needed a marvellous vision. But this man, after the Conception, when his soul was actually possessed with that evil suspicion, yet ready to exchange it for good hopes, if there appeared any one to guide that way, readily receives the revelation.

How, then, doth the angel re-assure him? Hear, and marvel at the wisdom of his words. For being come, he saith, *Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife.* He straightway puts him in mind of David, of whom the Christ was to spring; and he suffereth him not to be greatly disturbed, reminding him, by the title of his forefathers, of the promise made to the whole race. Else, wherefore doth he call him *Son of David*.

By saying *fear not*, he signifies him to have been afraid lest he should give offence to God by retaining her. Thus in all ways the angel proves that he came from God, bringing forward both what Joseph had felt, and what he had secretly thought to do.

Now, having mentioned her name, he stayed not at

this, but added also, *thy wife*, whereas he would not have called her so if she had been corrupted. And he calls her that is espoused a wife, as indeed the Scripture is wont to call betrothed husbands sons-in-law, even before marriage.

But what means to *take unto thee*? To retain her in his house, for in intention she had now been put away by him. "Her, being put away, do thou retain, saith he, as committed unto thee by God, not by her parents; and He commits her to thee not for marriage, but to dwell with thee; and by my voice doth He commit her." Much as Christ Himself afterwards committed her unto His disciple, so even now is she committed unto Joseph.

Then, having thus obscurely signified what was in question, he mentioned not the evil suspicion, but in a manner more reverent and seemly, he removed it, by announcing what had occurred; implying that the very thing which had made Joseph afraid, and for which he would have cast her out, this very thing, I say, was a just cause why he should retain her in his house; thus more than entirely doing away with his distress. For she is not only free, saith he, from unlawful intercourse, but even above all nature is her conception. Not only, therefore, put away thy fear, but even rejoice more exceedingly; *for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost.*

A strange thing it was of which he spoke, surpassing man's reason, and above all the laws of nature. How, then, is Joseph to believe, to whom such tidings are altogether new? By what has already happened, saith the angel, by the revelations already made. For with this intent he had laid open all things that were in Joseph's mind; what he felt, what he feared, what he was resolved to do; that by these tokens he might become assured of the truth of the tidings.

And indeed not only by things past, but likewise by things to come, he wins him over. *And she shall bring*

forth, saith he, *a Son, and thou shalt call His name Jesus*. For do not thou, because He is of the Holy Ghost, imagine that thou hast no part in the ministry of this Dispensation, since what pertains to a father, not injuring the honour of virginity, that do I give thee; *thou shalt call His name*. Though the offspring be not thine, yet shalt thou exhibit a father's care towards Him.

He shall save His people from their sins. Here, again, the thing is signified to be beyond all expectation, a work which had never been possible to any one before; for not from visible wars, neither from barbarians, but, what was far greater than all these, from sins, he declares the glad tidings of deliverance.

But wherefore, one may ask, did he say *His people* and not add the Gentiles also? That he might not startle the hearers. Yet to him who listens thoughtfully, he darkly signified the Gentiles also. For *His people* are not the Jews only, but all that draw nigh and receive the knowledge that is from Him.

And mark how the angel hath, by the way, to us also discovered His dignity, by calling the Jewish nation His people. For that implies nought else but that He who is born is the Son of God, the King of Heaven. For the forgiving of sins belongs not to any other power, but only to that One Being.

Now all this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the Prophet. In a tone worthy of the wonder, with all his might he hath uttered his voice, saying, *Now all this was done*. For when he saw the deep abyss of the love of God towards man, and that actually come to pass which never had been looked for; and the laws of nature broken, and reconciliation made; Him, who is above all, come down to him that is lower than all; and the "middle wall of partition broken¹," and all impediments removed; then, in one word, he hath put before us the miracle, saying, *No*

¹ Eph. ii. 14.

all this was done that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord. Think not, saith he, that these things are but now determined upon. They were prefigured of old.

The angel refers to Isaiah; Joseph being a righteous man, and one who studied the prophets. From these, then, he reasons. Before this he said, *Mary thy wife*; but now, when he hath brought the prophecy before him, he trusts him with the name of virginity. Joseph could not have continued thus unshaken when he heard from him of a virgin, unless he had first heard from Isaiah. For, indeed, it was nothing new that was to hear out of the prophets, but that which was familiar to him, and had been for a long time the subject of his meditations.

What, then, saith the oracle? *Behold, a Virgin shall with child, and shall bring forth a Son, and they shall call His name Emmanuel.*

How was it, then, that His name was not called Emmanuel, but Jesus Christ? Because he said not, thou shalt call, but, *they shall call*, that is, the multitude, and the issue of events. For here he puts the event as a name, and this is customary in Scripture. And if Jews are obstinate, we will ask them, When was the child called, "Make speed to the spoil, hasten to the prey?" They cannot say. How is it then that the Prophet said, "Call His name Maher-shalal-hash-zam?" Because, when He was born, there was a taking and dividing of spoils, therefore the event that took place in His time is put as His name. So it is said that the city shall be called, "The city of righteousness, the faithful city," and yet we nowhere find that the city was called "Righteousness," but it continued to be called Jerusalem.

Therefore, to say *they shall call Him Emmanuel*, means nothing else than that they shall see God amongst men.

^a Isa. viii. 3.

^b Isa. i. 26.

For He hath indeed always been amongst men, but never so manifestly.

If the Jews should object to what is said concerning Mary's virginity, that [while the Seventy say, Virgin] some translators use not the term "virgin," but "young woman;" we will answer in the first place that the Seventy are justly entitled to confidence before all other translators. For these others made their translation after the coming of Christ, continuing to be Jews, and may justly be suspected of having spoken in enmity, and of purposely darkening the prophecies; but the Seventy, as having entered upon this work a hundred years or more before the coming of Christ, stand clear from all suspicion, and on account of the date, and of their number, and of their agreement, have a better right to be trusted.

And what goes before also establishes this interpretation, for Isaiah first saith, "The Lord Himself shall give you a sign^o;" and then he subjoins, "Behold a Virgin shall conceive and bear a Son." Now if she that was to give birth was not a virgin, but this happened in the way of marriage, what sort of sign would the event be? For that which is a sign must necessarily be beyond the course of common events, it must be strange and extraordinary; else, how could it be a sign?

Then Joseph, being raised from sleep, did as the angel of the Lord had bidden him, and took unto him his wife; and knew her not till she had brought forth her first-born Son. He hath here used the word *till*, not that thou shouldst suspect that afterwards he did know her, but to inform thee that before the birth the Virgin was wholly untouched by man. But why then, it may be said, hath he used the word *till*? Because it is usual in Scripture to use this expression without reference to limitation of time. When discoursing of God, the Scripture saith, "From age until age Thou art God^p;"

• Isa. vii. 14. p Ps. xc. 2; E.V., "everlasting to everlasting."

born by faith and promise, these are the true Israel. And if He did not feed all Israel, it is their own fault. For whereas they ought to have worshipped with the wise men, and have glorified God that such a time was come, they, on the contrary, are troubled, make disturbance, and devise perpetual mischief.

Then Herod, when he had privily called the wise men, enquired of them. Because he thought the Jews would be in favour of the Child, and could never have expected that they would fall into such madness as to be willing to give up to His enemies their Protector and Saviour, and Him who was come for the deliverance of their nation, therefore he calls the wise men privily, and questions them, not concerning the Child, but the star, seeking for more than he declares.

And lo, the star which they saw in the east went before them, till it came and stood over where the young Child was.

Marvel was linked on to marvel. Both were strange things, the Magi worshipping, and the star going before them; and enough to move men made of stone. For if the wise men had said they had heard these things declared by prophets, or that angels had discoursed with them in private, this might have been disbelieved; but now, when the vision of the star appeared on high, even the mouths of the utterly shameless were stopped.

Moreover the star, when it stood over the young Child, stayed its course again; which thing shewed a greater power than belongs to a star, now to hide itself, now to appear, and now to stand still. Hence the wise men received an increase of faith. They rejoiced because they had found what they were seeking, because they had proved messengers of truth, because, not fruitlessly had they accomplished so great a journey. For first, the star comes and stands over His very Head, shewing that what is born is Divine; next, standing there, it leads them to worship Him, being

THE CIRCUMCISION.

THE EPISTLE.

ROMANS iv. 8—14.

“Blessed is the man,” &c.

Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin. Cometh this blessedness then upon the circumcision only, or upon the uncircumcision also?

The subject of enquiry here is, with whom is to be found this great and good thing, even the forgiveness of sins. Is it with the circumcision or with the uncircumcision? Paul shews that it is so far from shunning the uncircumcision, that it even dwelt gladly with it before the circumcision. And whereas he that pronounced it blessed was David, who was himself in a state of circumcision, and was speaking to men in circumcision, Paul eagerly contends for its application to the uncircumcised. After joining the ascription of blessedness to righteousness, and shewing that they are one and the same thing, he enquires how Abraham was made righteous, as uncircumcised, or as circumcised. Paul says,

How was it (that is, righteousness) then reckoned? when he was in circumcision, or in uncircumcision? Not in circumcision, but in uncircumcision. And, For we say, that faith was reckoned to Abraham for righteousness. Above he had spoken of the Scripture, “For what saith the Scripture?” he says, “Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness^a,” here he takes up also the judgment of those who are speaking with him, and shews that justification took place in

^a Rom. iv. 3.

seeing ye put it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy . . . lo, we turn to the Gentiles*."

Let us, then, follow the Magi, let us separate ourselves from our barbarous customs, and set ourselves at a distance from them, that we may see Christ: since they, had they not been far from their own country, would have missed seeing Him. Let us depart from the things of earth. The wise men while they were in Persia, saw only the star, but after they had departed from Persia they beheld the Sun of Righteousness. Indeed, they would not have seen so much as the star, unless they had readily risen up from thence. Let us, then, also rise up; though all men be troubled, let us run to the house of the young Child; though kings, though nations, though tyrants obstruct our path, let us not be turned aside.

So shall we escape all the dangers that beset us. These men, except they had gone to the young Child, would not have escaped danger from the king. Before seeing Him, fears and troubles and dangers pressed upon them, but after the adoration, all is calm and security; and now no longer a star, but an angel directs them in the way.

Do thou, therefore, likewise leave the Jewish people, the troubled city, the blood-thirsty tyrant, the pomp of the world, and hasten to Bethlehem, where is the house of the Spiritual Bread[†]. Though thou be but a shepherd, and come hither, thou wilt behold the young Child; though thou be one of the wise men, this will be no hindrance to thee; though thou be a king, and approach not, thy purple robe will profit thee nothing. Only let thy coming be to honour and adore, not to spurn the Son of God; only let it be with trembling and joy, for it is possible at the same time both to rejoice and to fear.

* Acts xiii. 46.

† Bethlehem signifies in Hebrew "the house of bread."

uncircumcision or in circumcision. Wherefore he goes on to say, *To them who are not of the circumcision only, but who also walk in the steps of that faith, &c.* For if he be father to the uncircumcised, it is not because he is uncircumcised that he is their father, although, indeed, he was justified in uncircumcision, but because they imitated his faith; much less is it owing to circumcision that he is the forefather of those in the state of circumcision, unless faith be added. For Paul says, that the reason of his receiving circumcision was that both of us two families might have him for a forefather, and that those in the uncircumcision might not thrust aside those in the circumcision. See how the former had him for their forefather first. Now, if the circumcision be of dignity owing to its preaching righteousness, the uncircumcision hath no small pre-eminence in having received the same before the circumcision. Therefore wilt thou be able to have Abraham as a forefather, when thou walkest in the steps of his faith, and art not contentious, nor a cause of division by bringing in the law.

The steps of that faith. . . .

What faith? That *which he had being yet uncircumcised.* Here, again, he lays low the lofty spirit of the Jews, by reminding them of the time of the justification. If you reject the uncircumcision, know for certain that circumcision is of no more use to you. For if you follow not in the steps of his faith, though you were ever so much in a state of circumcision, you will not be Abraham's offspring. He calls it a sign of the righteousness of the faith. And this sign was given for thy sake; thou wert then in need of bodily signs, but now there is no need of them. "And was it not possible," it might be said, "from his faith alone to learn the goodness of his soul?" Yes, it was possible, but then thou stoodest in need of this addition. For since thou didst not imitate the goodness of his soul, and wert not able to see it, a sensible circumcision was

given thee, that, after having become accustomed to this of the body, thou mightest by little and little be led on to the true love of it in the soul also, and that having with much seriousness received it as a very great privilege, thou mightest be instructed to imitate and revere thine ancestor. This object had God not only in the circumcision, but in all the other rites, the sacrifices, and the sabbaths and feasts. Now that it was for thy sake that Abraham received the circumcision, learn from the sequel. After saying that he received a sign and a seal, Paul gives the reason as follows: that he might be the father of the circumcision, that is, of those who received the spiritual circumcision also, since, if you have only the circumcision of the flesh, no farther good will come to you. For then is it a sign, when the reality of which it is the sign is found with thee, that is, faith; since if thou have not this, the sign has no longer the value of a sign to thee; for of what is it the sign, when there is nothing signified? or of what is it the seal, when there is nothing to be sealed? It is much as if you were to shew a purse with a seal upon it, when there was nothing laid up within. And so the outward circumcision is vain, if there be no faith within. For if it be a sign of righteousness, but you have not righteousness, then it is no sign with you. The reason of your receiving a sign was that you might seek diligently for that reality whereof you have the sign. If you had been sure of diligently seeking for it without a sign, then you had not needed one. But this is not the only thing that circumcision proclaims, namely, righteousness, but righteousness even in one uncircumcised. Circumcision, then, does indeed proclaim that there is no need of circumcision.

For if they which are of the law be heirs, faith is made void, and the promise made of none effect.

He had shewn that faith is necessary, that it is older than circumcision, that it is more mighty than the

law, that it establisheth the law. For if all sinned, it was necessary: if Abraham being uncircumcised was justified (through faith), it is older: if the knowledge of sin is by the Law, and yet righteousness was without the Law made evident, it is more mighty: if it is "witnessed by the Law," and "establisheth the Law^e," it is not opposed to it, but is friendly and allied to it. Again, he shews from another point of view that it was not even possible by the Law to attain to the inheritance, and after having matched faith with the circumcision, and gained it the victory, he next sets faith in array against the Law in these words, *For if they which are of the law be heirs, faith is made void.* For lest it should be said that a man may both have faith, and also keep the Law, he shews this to be impracticable. For he that clings to the Law as of saving force, does disparagement to the power of faith; and so he says *faith is made void*, that is, there is in this case no need of salvation by grace. Faith cannot then shew forth its proper power, and the promise is made of none effect. This is because the Jew might say, "What need have I of faith?" Well, if this was so, along with faith is overthrown also all that you have of the promise. See how in all things he goes back to the beginning, and uses the patriarch as the ground of his attack on them. For having proved from his case that righteousness was part of the inheritance of faith, he now shews that it is the same with the promise likewise. For, lest the Jew should say, "What matters it to me if Abraham was justified by faith?" Paul says, That which is so precious to you, the promise of the inheritance, cannot come into effect apart from faith. And this was a thing to alarm them exceedingly. But of what promise is Paul speaking? Of the promise that Abraham should be the heir of the world, and that in him all nations should be blessed^f.

^e Rom. iii. 21.

^f St. Chrysostom.

THE GOSPEL.

ST. LUKE ii. 15—21.

“And it came to pass as the angels,” &c.

And it came to pass, as the angels were gone away from them into heaven, the shepherds said one to another, Let us now go even unto Bethlehem, and see this thing which is come to pass, which the Lord hath made known unto us. And they came with haste, and found Mary and Joseph, and the babe lying in a manger.

And they came in haste, for no one indolently seeks after Christ^s.

Because they came in haste, and not with loitering steps; it follows, *They found Mary* (i.e. her who had brought Jesus into the world) *and Joseph* (i.e. the guardian of our Lord's birth), and the Babe lying in a manger (i.e. the Lord Himself)^b.

At His birth He is laid in a manger, and abides in an inn, and takes a mother of low estate; teaching us to think no such things a disgrace, and from the first, trampling under foot the haughtiness of man, and bidding us give ourselves up to virtue onlyⁱ.

That was the manger which Israel knew not, according to those words of Isaiah^k, “The ox knoweth his owner, and the ass his master's crib; but Israel doth not know, my people doth not consider^l.”

And when they had seen it, they made known abroad the saying which was told them concerning this Child.

Esteem not the words of the shepherds as mean and despicable. For from the shepherds Mary increases her faith, as it follows, *Mary kept all these things, and pondered them in her heart^m.*

And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising

^s St. Ambrose, Cat. Aur.
stom, Hom. ix. in Matt.
^m St. Ambrose, Catena.

^b Origen, Cat. Aur.
^k Isa. i. 3.

ⁱ St. Chrysostom, Hom. ix. in Matt.
^l Origen, Cat. Aur.

God for all the things which they had heard and seen, as it was told unto them. Every one rejoiced in the Nativity of Christ, not with human feelings, as men are wont to rejoice when a son is born, but at the presence of Christ, and the lustre of the Divine lightⁿ.

And when eight days were accomplished for the circumcising of the Child, His name was called JESUS, which was so named of the angel before He was conceived in the womb.

It was the custom on the eighth day to perform the circumcision of the flesh. For on the eighth day Christ rose from the dead, and conveyed to us a spiritual circumcision, saying, "Go and teach all nations, baptizing them^o."

As we have died with Him at His death, and risen together with Him at His resurrection, so with Him have we been circumcised, and therefore need not now circumcision in the flesh. And that for our sakes He was circumcised, hear Paul most clearly testifying^p; "For in Him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily. And ye are complete in Him, which is the head of all principality and power: in whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands^q."

Christ was circumcised for several reasons. First, to shew the reality of His flesh, in opposition to Manichæus and others, who say that He came forth in appearance only. Secondly, that He might prove that His Body was not of the same substance with the Deity, in opposition to Apollinaris, and that it descended not from heaven, as Valentinian said. Thirdly, to add a confirmation to circumcision which He had of old instituted to wait His coming. Lastly, to leave no excuse to the Jews^r. For had He not been circumcised they might have objected that they could not receive Christ uncircumcised.

ⁿ St. Athanasius, Cat. Aur. 9—11.

^q Origen, Cat. Aur.

^o St. Cyril, Cat. Aur.

^p Col. ii.

^r Epiphanius, Cat. Aur.

transformed by the renewing of your mind. For the fashion of this world is grovelling and worthless, and it is but for a time, and nought hath it that is lofty, or lasting, or straightforward, but it is wholly perverted. And this is why he calls it a *fashion*; and so in another passage, "For the fashion of this world passeth away^b." He says not, change the fashion, but, be transformed (metamorphosed), to shew that the world's ways are but an external fashion or appearance; but the ways of virtue are not a mere fashion, but a real form or substance, with a natural beauty of its own, needing not the trickeries and fashions of outward things, which so soon appear than they go to nought.

If, then, thou throwest the *fashion* aside, thou wilt speedily come to the *form*.

Then since it is likely that, being men, they would in every day, he consoles them by saying, "Renew thyself from day to day." Hast thou sinned to-day? Hast thou made thy soul old? Despair not, despond not, but renew it by repentance, by tears, by confession, and by good actions. And never fail of doing this. And how are we to do this?

That ye may prove [things more important and knowⁱ] what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God.

Who, it may be asked, is ignorant of what is important, and what is the will of God? They that are

E. V., "conformed,") is, in the Greek, from σχῆμα (*Schema*), which seems used to signify outward appearance as opposed to reality. "Transformed" (metamorphosed) is from μορφή (*morphé*), here used to express reality, or the real nature, as opposed to the mere appearance. The English versions of Tyndale, Cranmer, and Geneva, have "fashion not yourselves" in the first part of this verse.

^b 1 Cor. vii. 31.

ⁱ The words in brackets occur, not here, but in Rom. ii. 18, and Phil. i. 10, and are translated (E. V.) "Things that are [more] excellent." They are supposed to have been introduced by St. Chrysostom by mistake, quoting from memory. They are, however, so interwoven in the beautiful commentary which follows, with the genuine words of St. Paul, that they are repeated here rather than that the passage should be mutilated or omitted.

THE EPIPHANY.

THE EPISTLE.

EPHESIANS iii. 1—12.

“For this cause, I Paul, the prisoner,” &c.

For this cause, I Paul, the prisoner of Jesus Christ for you Gentiles.

He has mentioned Christ's great and affectionate care; he now passes on to his own, insignificant indeed as it is, and a very nothing in comparison with that, and yet this is enough to attach them to himself. For this cause, saith he, am I also bound. If my Lord and Master was crucified for you, much more am I bound for you. He was not only bound Himself, but allows His servants to be bound also, *for you Gentiles*. It is full of emphasis; not only do we no longer loathe you, but we are even bound, saith he, for your sakes, and of this exceeding grace am I partaker.

If ye have heard of the dispensation of the grace of God, which is given me to you-ward.

Paul alludes to the prediction addressed to Ananias concerning him at Damascus, when the Lord said, “Go thy way, for he is a chosen vessel unto Me, to bear My name before the Gentiles and kings.”

By *the dispensation of grace*, he means the revelation made to him, as much as to say, I learned not from man^a; God vouchsafed this revelation to me, though but an individual, for your sakes. For Himself said unto me, “Depart: for I will send thee far hence unto the Gentiles^b.” Thus well doth he call it *the dispensation*^c, for a dispensation it was, and a mighty one, to call one, uninfluenced from any other quarter, immediately from

^a Gal. i. 12.

^b Acts xxii. 21.

^c “Dispensation.” See note in Gospel for Christmas Day.

ve, and to say, "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou
d?" and to strike him blind with that ineffable
t.

*Now that by revelation He made known unto me the
mystery (as I wrote afore in few words, whereby, when ye
l, ye may understand my knowledge in the mystery of
ist).*

This alludes, perhaps, to what he said to them in the
s, that he had some special knowledge that the
stiles also were to be called. This, he says, is his
knowledge, the *knowledge in the mystery*, which
had mentioned, viz. that Christ will "make in Him-
of twain one new man^e."

Vell doth he call this a mystery, for a mystery
ed it is, in a movement to raise the Gentiles to
higher rank than the Jews.

*Which in other ages was not made known unto the sons
men, as it is now revealed unto his holy Apostles and
phets, by the Spirit; That the Gentiles should be
no-heirs, and of the same body, and partakers of His
mise in Christ, by the Gospel.*

What, then, Did not the Prophets know it? How,
n, doth Christ say, that Moses and the Prophets
ote these things concerning Himself? and again,
lad ye believed Moses, ye would have believed
";" and, again, "Search the Scriptures; for in
m ye think ye have eternal life: and they are
y which testify of Me^s." His meaning is this, either
t it was not revealed unto all men, for he adds,
*Which in other ages was not made known unto the sons
men, as it is now revealed*; or else, that it was not
s made known by the very facts and realities them-
es, *As it is now revealed unto the holy Apostles and
phets by the Spirit.*

*That the Gentiles should be fellow-heirs, and of the
e body, and partakers of the promise.*

^d Acts ix. 4.

^e Eph. ii. 15.

^f St. John v. 46.

^s St. John v. 39.

This is the great thing, this exceeding closeness of relation to Him, that they should be *of the same body*. That they were to be called, they knew; but that it was to these privileges, as yet they knew not. This, therefore, he calls the mystery of the promise. The Israelites were partakers, but the Gentiles also were partakers of the promise of God.

Partakers of His promise in Christ by the Gospel.

That is, by His being sent unto them also, and by their believing. For it is not said simply *in Christ*, but, *by the Gospel*.

Whereof I was made a minister, according to the gift of the grace of God given unto me by the effectual working of His power.

Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given. What grace? That I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ.

Paul himself was sent to the Gentiles, the other Apostles to the Circumcision. So that the more marvellous and astonishing commission was given, saith he, *to me, who am less than the least*. And this too was of grace, that the least should have the greatest things entrusted to him; that he should be made the herald of those glad tidings. For he that is made a herald of the greater glad tidings, is in this respect the greater.

And to make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ: to the intent, that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known by the Church the manifold wisdom of God.

True, to man it was not revealed, but art thou enlightening angels and archangels, and principalities and powers? I am, saith he. For it was hid in God, even in God who created all things by Jesus Christ. And dost thou venture to utter this? I do, saith he. But whence hath this been made manifest to the angels? By the Church. Angels know only this, that

“the Lord’s portion was His people^h.” The glad tidings were, “Who shall save His people Israelⁱ,” not a word about the Gentiles. That they were called indeed, the angels knew, but that it was to the same privileges as Israel, this who would ever have expected? who would ever have believed? Again, he saith not merely the varied wisdom, but the *manifold*, that is, the multiplied and varied wisdom of God.

Which hath been hid in God. This dispensation he more clearly unfolds in the Epistle to the Romans. *In God, who created all things by Jesus Christ.* He does well to mention the creation, adding *by Jesus Christ*, forasmuch as He who created all things by Him revealeth also this by Him.

According to the eternal purpose which He purposed in Jesus Christ our Lord. It hath been now brought to pass, but not now decreed. It had been planned beforehand from the very beginning.

In whom we have boldness and access with confidence by the faith of Him.

Have access, not as prisoners, nor yet as persons who are candidates for pardon, nor as sinners; for, saith he, *we have boldness with confidence*, boldness accompanied with cheerful trust. Boldness arising from what source? *The faith of Him^k.*

THE GOSPEL.

ST. MATT. ii. 1—12.

“When Jesus was,” &c.

When Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judæa, in the days of Herod the king, behold, there came wise men from the east to Jerusalem, saying, Where is He that is born

^h Deut. xxxii. 8, 9, Sept.

ⁱ St. Matt. i. 21.

^k St. Chrysostom.

King of the Jews ? for we have seen His star in the east, and are come to worship Him.

For what purpose did this star appear ? To reprove the Jews for their insensibility, and to cut off from them all excuse for their wilful ignorance. For, since He who came was to put an end to the ancient polity, and to call the world to the worship of Himself, and to be worshipped in all land and sea, He, from the very beginning, opens the door to the Gentiles, willing through strangers to admonish His own people. Thus, because the Jews heeded not the Prophets, who spake continually of His advent, He made even barbarians to come from a far country, to seek after the King that was among them. And they learn from a Persian tongue what they would not submit to learn from the prophets ; in order that if, on the one hand, they were disposed to be candid, they might have the strongest motive for obedience ; if, on the other hand, they were contentious, they might be deprived of all excuse. For what could they have to plead who did not receive Christ after so many prophets had spoken, when they saw that wise men, at the sight of a single star, received and worshipped Him. As He acted in the case of the Ninevites, when He sent Jonas, and as in the case of the Samaritan and the Canaanitish women, so did He act in this instance of the Magi. For this cause He also said, “The men of Nineveh shall rise . . . shall condemn :” and “the queen of the south shall rise . . . shall condemn this generation¹,” because these believed the lesser things, but the Jews not even the greater.

Wherefore are both the time and the place mentioned, namely, *in Bethlehem, in the days of Herod the king ?* To bring to our remembrance the ancient prophecies, whereof one was uttered by Micah, saying, *And thou Bethlehem, in the land of Juda, art not the least among the princes of Juda ;* and the other by the

¹ St. Matt. xii. 41, 42.

patriarch Jacob, distinctly marking out to us the time, and setting forth the great sign of His coming. For he saith that "A ruler shall not fail out of Judah, nor a leader out of his loins, until He come for whom it is appointed, and He is the expectation of the Gentiles^m."

And this again is worth enquiry, whence it was that the wise men came to entertain such a thought as brought them on this journey, and who it was that stirred them up to this. For it doth not seem to me to be the work of the star only, but also of God, who moved their soul; as He did in the case of Cyrus, when He disposed him to let the Jews go. He did not, however, so do this as to destroy their free will; but even as when He called Paul from above by a voice, He manifested both His own grace, and Paul's obedience.

And wherefore, one may ask, did He not reveal this to all the wise men of the east? Because all would not have believed, but these were better prepared than the rest. Thus, also, there were countless nations that perished, but it was to the Ninevites only that the prophet was sent; there were two thieves on the cross, but one only was saved. See also the courage of these men, as shewn not only by their coming, but also by their boldness of speech. They tell who shewed them the way, and the length of their journey; and, *we are come, say they, to worship Him*. They were afraid neither of the people's anger, nor of the tyranny of the king.

When Herod the king had heard these things, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him.

Herod naturally, as being king, and afraid both for himself and for his children; but why Jerusalem? Surely the prophets had foretold Him as a Saviour, and a Benefactor, and a Deliverer from above. Wherefore, then, was Jerusalem troubled? From the same feeling which before caused them to turn away from

^m Gen. xlix. 10.

God when pouring His benefits upon them, and while in the enjoyment of freedom, to look back upon the flesh-pots of Egypt.

Nevertheless, although troubled, so careless are they, that neither do they follow the wise men, nor even enquire into what hath happened.

And when he had gathered all the chief priests and scribes of the people together, he demanded of them where Christ should be born. And they said unto him, in Bethlehem of Judæa.

Seest thou how all things are done to convict the Jews? How, as long as He was out of their sight, envy laid not hold of them, and they truthfully declared the testimonies concerning Him; but when they saw the glory that arose from the miracles, a jealous spirit possessed them, and thenceforth they betrayed the truth.

However, by all things the truth was exalted, and strength was added to it, even by its enemies. See, for example, how wonderful and beyond all expectation are the results secretly provided for, in their assuming that Christ should be born at that time. For both the barbarians and the Jews alike learn something one of another, and instruct one another. Thus the Jews hear from the wise men, that a star had proclaimed Him in the land of the Persians; the wise men are informed by the Jews, that this man, whom the star proclaimed, prophets also had made known from the olden time. The enemies of the truth are compelled, even against their will, to read the writings and to interpret the prophecy in favour of the truth, although they give not the whole of it. For having spoken of Bethlehem, and how that out of it He was to come that should rule Israel, they suppress what follows, out of flattery to the king. And what was this? That His "goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting."

"But why," some may say, "if He was to come from

Bethlehem, why did He live in Nazareth after His birth, and thus obscure the prophecy?" Nay, He did not obscure it, but unfolded it the more. For the fact, that while His mother had her constant residence in the one place, He was born in the other, shews the thing to have been done by a Divine dispensation.

And for this cause also, let me add, He removed not from Bethlehem immediately after His birth, but abode there forty days, giving opportunity to such as were disposed, accurately to examine all these things; and there were in truth many things to move them to enquiry, if they had been disposed to give heed to them. Thus, at the coming of the wise men, the whole city was in a flutter, and with the city, the king also: and the testimony of the prophet was brought forward, and a court of high authority was summoned, and many other things happened, as Luke relates, such as those concerning Zacharias, and the angels, and the shepherds, and Simeon and Anna; all which were sufficient to stir up the attentive observer to enquire what had taken place.

He manifested Himself, then, from the beginning by many miracles, but when they would not understand these, He hid Himself for a while, to be again revealed from another more glorious beginning. For it was no longer the wise men, nor the star, but the Father from above that proclaimed Him at the streams of Jordan; and the Spirit came upon Him, guiding that voice to the head of Him just baptized; and John, with all plainness of speech, cried aloud everywhere in Judæa, till inhabited and waste country alike were filled with his teaching; and the witness, too, of the miracles, and the earth and sea, and the whole creation, uttered in His behalf a distinct voice. But, at the time of the birth, only just so many things happened as were fitted quietly to mark out Him that was come. Thus, in order that the Jews might not say, "We know not when He was born, nor where;" and that they might

have no excuse to plead for not having enquired into these things, therefore the events which we have mentioned, were, by God's providence, brought to pass.

But mark also the exactness of the prophecy, for it does not say, "He will *abide* in Bethlehem," but **He** will *come out* thence; so that His being simply born there was also a subject of prophecy.

Some being past shame, say, that these things were spoken of Zerubbabel. But how can they be right? For surely his "goings forth were not from of old, from everlastingⁿ." And how can that suit him, which is said, "Out of thee shall He come forth;" Zorobabel not having been born in Judæa, but in Babylon, whence indeed he was called Zorobabel. And, besides these things, the time which has since passed has sufficed to establish the testimony. *Thou art not the least among the Princes of Juda*, and the cause of the pre-eminence is added, *Out of thee shall He come*. No one hath made that place illustrious or eminent **ex-**cepting Him alone, and since that birth men come from the ends of the earth to see that manger and the site of that shed.

But how saith he that Bethlehem is *not the least among the Princes of Juda*? for not in Palestine alone, but in the whole world, the village is become conspicuous. Why, so far he was speaking to Jews; thus also he added, *He shall feed^o My people Israel*; and yet He fed the whole world; but, he is fain **not** as yet to offend the Jews by revealing what he **hath** to say touching the Gentiles.

But, some may say, how was it that He did not **feed** the Jewish people? I answer, first, this too is **accom-**plished: for by the term Israel in this place such **are** meant as believed on Him from among the Jews. **And** Paul interpreting the promise, saith, "They are not **all** Israel, which are of Israel^p," but as many as have been

ⁿ Micah v. 2.

^o E. V., rule; marg., feed.

^p Rom. ix. 6.

born by faith and promise, these are the true Israel. And if He did not feed all Israel, it is their own fault. For whereas they ought to have worshipped with the wise men, and have glorified God that such a time was come, they, on the contrary, are troubled, make disturbance, and devise perpetual mischief.

Then Herod, when he had privily called the wise men, enquired of them. Because he thought the Jews would be in favour of the Child, and could never have expected that they would fall into such madness as to be willing to give up to His enemies their Protector and Saviour, and Him who was come for the deliverance of their nation, therefore he calls the wise men privily, and questions them, not concerning the Child, but the star, seeking for more than he declares.

And lo, the star which they saw in the east went before them, till it came and stood over where the young Child was.

Marvel was linked on to marvel. Both were strange things, the Magi worshipping, and the star going before them; and enough to move men made of stone. For if the wise men had said they had heard these things declared by prophets, or that angels had discoursed with them in private, this might have been disbelieved; but now, when the vision of the star appeared on high, even the mouths of the utterly shameless were stopped.

Moreover the star, when it stood over the young Child, stayed its course again; which thing shewed a greater power than belongs to a star, now to hide itself, now to appear, and now to stand still. Hence the wise men received an increase of faith. They rejoiced because they had found what they were seeking, because they had proved messengers of truth, because, not fruitlessly had they accomplished so great a journey. For first, the star comes and stands over His very Head, shewing that what is born is Divine; next, standing there, it leads them to worship Him, being

not simple barbarians, but the wiser sort amongst them.

Shame upon Marcion, shame upon Paul of Samosata^a, for refusing to see what those wise men saw,—the forefathers of the Church; for I am not ashamed so to call them. Let Marcion be ashamed, beholding God worshipped in the flesh. Let Paul be ashamed, beholding Him worshipped as not being a mere man. As to His being in the flesh, that is signified by the swaddling clothes and the manger; as to their not worshipping Him as a mere man, they declare it, by offering to Him, at that unripe age, such gifts as were meet to be offered to God. And together with Marcion and Paul, let the Jews also be ashamed, seeing themselves anticipated by barbarians, whilst they submit not so much as even to follow them. For, indeed, what happened then was a type of what should happen afterwards; and thus from the very beginning it was shewn that the Gentiles would anticipate the Jews.

But how, then, was it, some may ask, that Christ said not at the beginning of His miracles, but later, “Go ye, and make disciples of all nations^r?” This also was a type of the future, declaring it, as it were, beforehand. For the natural order was that the Jews should come to Him first; but forasmuch as they of their own choice gave up their privilege, the order of things was inverted. The wise men ought not to have come before the Jews; persons from so great a distance ought not to have anticipated those who were settled about the very city; those who had heard nothing ought not to have prevented those that were nurtured in so many prophecies. But because the Jews were exceedingly ignorant of their own blessings, those from Persia anticipated those at Jerusalem. And this, indeed, is what Paul saith: “It was necessary that the word of God should first have been spoken to you: but

^a Marcion denied Christ's human nature, Paul His Divinity.

^r St. Matt. xxviii. 19, margin.

seeing ye put it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy . . . lo, we turn to the Gentiles^a."

Let us, then, follow the Magi, let us separate ourselves from our barbarous customs, and set ourselves at a distance from them, that we may see Christ: since they, had they not been far from their own country, would have missed seeing Him. Let us depart from the things of earth. The wise men while they were in Persia, saw only the star, but after they had departed from Persia they beheld the Sun of Righteousness. Indeed, they would not have seen so much as the star, unless they had readily risen up from thence. Let us, then, also rise up; though all men be troubled, let us run to the house of the young Child; though kings, though nations, though tyrants obstruct our path, let us not be turned aside.

So shall we escape all the dangers that beset us. These men, except they had gone to the young Child, would not have escaped danger from the king. Before seeing Him, fears and troubles and dangers pressed upon them, but after the adoration, all is calm and security; and now no longer a star, but an angel directs them in the way.

Do thou, therefore, likewise leave the Jewish people, the troubled city, the blood-thirsty tyrant, the pomp of the world, and hasten to Bethlehem, where is the house of the Spiritual Bread^b. Though thou be but a shepherd, and come hither, thou wilt behold the young Child; though thou be one of the wise men, this will be no hindrance to thee; though thou be a king, and approach not, thy purple robe will profit thee nothing. Only let thy coming be to honour and adore, not to spurn the Son of God; only let it be with trembling and joy, for it is possible at the same time both to rejoice and to fear.

^a Acts xiii. 46.

^b Bethlehem signifies in Hebrew "the house of bread."

But take heed that thou be not like Herod, saying *That I may come and worship Him*, and when thou art being minded to slay Him. Herod do they resemble who partake of the mysteries unworthily; it being said that such an one shall be “guilty of the Body and Blood of the Lord.” Yes, for they have within themselves the tyrant who is opposed to Christ’s kingdom and who is more wicked than Herod of old, even Mammon. Mammon would fain have the dominion and sends them that are his own to worship in appearance, slaying while they worship. Let us fear then, lest at any time, while we have the appearance of suppliants and worshippers, we should in deed find enemies. Let us cast everything out of our hands, when we come to worship; if gold be in our hand, let us offer it to Him. For if those barbarians then offered it for honour only, what will become of thee, not giving to Him even when He hath need? If those men journeyed so far to see Him newly born, what sort of excuse wilt thou have, not going out thy way one alley’s length that thou mayst visit Him sick or in bonds^{*}? When sick or in bonds, even our enemies receive our pity; but thine is denied to thy Benefactor and thy Lord. They offered gold, thou hardly givest bread. They saw the star, and were glad; thou, seeing Christ Himself a stranger and naked, seest Him unmoved.

And being warned of God in a dream that they should not return to Herod, they departed into their own country another way. See from this also their faith, how they were not offended, but were docile and obedient. They are not troubled, they reason not within themselves saying, “And yet, if this Child be great, and have power, what need of flight and of a clandestine retreat? And wherefore can it be that when we call openly and with boldness, and have stood against

^{*} 1 Cor. xi. 27.

^{*} See St. Matt. xxv. 35—45.

great a people, and so cruel a king, the angel sends us away as runaways or fugitives? But none of these things did they either say or think. For this especially belongs to faith, not to seek a reason for what is enjoined, but simply to obey the commandment laid upon us ^v.

^v St. Chrysostom.

THE FIRST SUNDAY AFTER THE EPIPHANY.

THE EPISTLE.

ROMANS xii. 1—5.

“I beseech you,” &c.

I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.

How is the body to become a sacrifice? Let thine eye look upon no evil thing, and it hath become a sacrifice; let thy tongue speak nothing filthy, and it hath become an offering; let thy hand do no lawless deed, and it hath become a whole burnt-offering. But this is not enough, we must have good works also: let the hand do alms, the mouth bless them that despitefully use us, and the ear find leisure evermore for the hearing of Scripture. For sacrifice can be made of that only which is clean; sacrifice is a first-fruit of other actions. Let us, then, from our hands, and feet, and mouth, and all our other members, yield a first-fruit unto God. Such a sacrifice is well-pleasing, and not, as that of the Jews, unclean, for “their sacrifices,” says the Scripture, “shall be unto them as the bread of mourners^a.” Not so ours. Theirs presented the thing sacrificed dead; ours maketh the thing sacrificed to be alive. For when we have mortified our members, then we shall be able truly to live. For the law of this sacrifice is new, and the fire of a marvellous nature. For it needeth no wood under it, but liveth of itself, and doth not burn up the victim, but rather quickeneth it. This was the sacrifice that God sought

^a Hos. ix. 4.

of old. Wherefore the prophet saith, "The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit^b." And the three children offered this when they said, "At this time there is neither prince, nor prophet, nor leader, nor burnt-offering, nor place to sacrifice before Thee, and to find mercy. Nevertheless, in a contrite heart and an humble spirit, let us be accepted^c."

Now observe how great the exactness wherewith Paul useth each word. For he does not say, *offer* your bodies as a sacrifice, but *present* them; as if he had said, never more have any interest in them. Ye have given them up to another. They that furnish the horses for war have no further interest in them: even so hast thou presented thy members for the war against the devil, and for that dread battle array. Do not debase them to selfish uses. He shews yet another thing from this, that we must make them approved, if we mean to present them. For it is not to any mortal being that we present them, but to God, the King of the universe. Since, then, the body is both to be presented, and is a sacrifice, rid it of every spot; because if it have one spot, it will no longer be fit for a sacrifice. For neither can the adulterous eye be sacrificed, nor the hand be presented that is grasping and rapacious, nor the belly that is the slave of self-indulgence, nor the heart that hath rage in it, nor the tongue that uttereth filthy things. Hence we must search out the spots on our body upon every side. For if they that offered the sacrifices of old were bidden to look on every side, and were not permitted to offer an animal "that hath anything superfluous or lacking, or is scurvy, or scabbed^d;" much more must we, who offer not senseless animals but ourselves, exercise greater strictness, and be pure in all respects, that we also may be able to say as did Paul, "I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand^e."

^b Ps. li. 17.

^c Song of the Three Children xv. 16.

^d Lev. xxii. 22, 23.

^e 2 Tim. iv. 6.

He was purer than any sacrifice, and so he speaks of himself as "ready to be offered." But this can only be brought about if we kill the old man, if we mortify our members that are upon the earth, if we crucify the world unto ourselves. In this way we shall no longer need the knife, nor the altar, nor the fire—or rather we shall want all these, but not such as are made with hands; for all of them will come to us from above; from above will come the fire and the knife, and the breadth of heaven will be our altar. For if when Elijah offered the visible sacrifice, a flame came down from above, and consumed all the water and wood and stones, much more will this be done upon thee. And if thou hast aught in thee that is worldly, and yet offerest the sacrifice with a good intention, the fire of the Spirit will come down, and will both consume the worldliness, and make perfect the whole sacrifice.

But what is *reasonable service*?

It means the spiritual ministry, the life which is according to Christ. As, then, one that ministers in the house of God, collects himself, and frames himself to greater solemnity, so ought we to bear in mind all our life that we are doing holy service before God. And this will be if every day you bring Him sacrifices, and become the priest of your own body, and of your own soul; as, for example, when you offer soberness, almsgiving, goodness, and forbearance. For in doing thus you offer a *reasonable service*, that is, a service without aught that is bodily, gross, visible.

And now he shews the way whereby we may compass all this.

And be not fashioned^s after this world; but be y

^t "Reasonable," λογικήν. What belongs to the spiritual order of things, and the spiritual part of man's nature: opposed to what is visible, material, fleshly. "Reasonable service" is the worship of the part by which he is a *being of reason and conscience*.—R. W. C.

^s The English version gives, "Be not conformed . . . but . . . transformed." This does not convey the opposition of the Greek word dwelt upon by St. Chrysostom. The word here translated "fashioned

by the renewing of your mind. For the
 this world is grovelling and worthless, and
 time, and nought hath it that is lofty, or
 straightforward, but it is wholly perverted.
 why he calls it a *fashion*; and so in another
 or the fashion of this world passeth away^h.”
 t, change the fashion, but, be transformed
 osed), to shew that the world’s ways are
 fashion or appearance; but the ways of
 ot a mere fashion, but a real form or sub-
 a natural beauty of its own, needing not
 es and fashions of outward things, which
 appear than they go to nought.

thou throwest the *fashion* aside, thou wilt
 re to the *form*.

ce it is likely that, being men, they would
 ay, he consoles them by saying, “Renew
 day to day.” Hast thou sinned to-day?
 made thy soul old? Despair not, despond
 ew it by repentance, by tears, by confes-
 y good actions. And never fail of doing
 how are we to do this?

*ay prove [things more important and knowⁱ]
 good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God.*
 nay be asked, is ignorant of what is im-
 what is the will of God? They that are

med,”) is, in the Greek, from *σχῆμα* (*Schema*), which
 signify outward appearance as opposed to reality.
 (metamorphosed) is from *μορφή* (*morphé*), here used
 lity, or the real nature, as opposed to the mere ap-
 English versions of Tyndale, Cranmer, and Geneva,
 on not yourselves” in the first part of this verse.

31.

in brackets occur, not here, but in Rom. ii. 18, and
 are translated (E. V.) “Things that are [more] ex-
 are supposed to have been introduced by St. Chry-
 take, quoting from memory. They are, however, so
 the beautiful commentary which follows, with the
 of St. Paul, that they are repeated here rather than
 e should be mutilated or omitted.

agitated by the things of this world, they that deem riches an enviable thing, they that despise poverty, they that follow after power, they that are eager after outward glory, they that think themselves great men when they build fine houses, and buy costly sepulchres, and keep numerous slaves; these know not what is important for them, or what the will of God is. For both these are but one thing. For God willeth what things are important for us, and what God willeth that also is important for us. What, then, are the things which God willeth? That we should live in poverty, in lowliness of mind, in contempt of glory; in continency, not in self-indulgence; in tribulation, not in ease; in sorrow, not in dissipation and laughter; and so in all else whereon He hath given us laws.

For I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith.

Here, in imitation of his Master, Paul is bringing before us the mother of good deeds, which is lowliness of mind. For as Christ, when He went up into the mountain, and was about to set forth His moral teaching, took this for His beginning, and made this the foundation, "Blessed are the poor in spirit^k;" so Paul, too, as he has now passed from his doctrinal teaching to that of a more practical kind, has first taught us virtue in general terms; and then, being on the point of giving a more particular portrait of it, he begins from lowliness of mind, as from the head, and tells us, not to think more highly of ourselves than we ought to think, (for this is the will of God,) *but to think soberly*. What he means is this: We have received wisdom, not that it should make us haughty, but that it should make us sober-minded. And he does not say, in order to be lowly in mind, but in order to sobriety, meaning by sobriety here, not that virtue which con-

^k Matt. v. 3.

rasts with bodily intemperance, but the being sober and healthful in mind. And the Greek word means keeping the mind safe. To shew, then, that he who is not thus modest cannot be sober either, that is, cannot be staid and healthful minded; he calls lowliness of mind, soberness of mind.

According as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith. For as we have many members in one body, and all members have not the same office; so we, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another.

Many, both among the Romans and among the Corinthians, were unreasonably elated by the gifts which were given unto them; see how Paul lays open the cause of the disease, and step by step removes it. After saying that we should think soberly, he proceeds, *according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith*, calling here the gift, *faith*: and by using the word *dealt*, he solaces him who had the less, and humbles him who had the greater share. For if God dealt it, and it is no achievement of thine own, why think highly of thyself? Again, if we are *members one of another*, why dost thou think highly of thyself? or why does another despise himself? are we not all one body, both great and small? When, then, we are all together but one, and members one of another, why dost thou by thy haughtiness separate thyself? why dost thou put thy brother to shame? for as he is a member of thee, so art thou also, a member of him. We are members one of another, not the small of the great only, but also the great of the small.

We have received wisdom, not that we should use it to make us haughty, but to make us sober-minded. Since, then, we know this, let us practise humility. For there is nothing so powerful; it is stronger than a rock, and harder than adamant, and places us in a safety greater than that of towers, and cities, and walls, being too high for any artillery of the devil.

But, on the other hand, pride makes men a prey even to ordinary accidents, being broken more easily than a bubble, and rent more speedily than a spider's web, and dissolved more quickly than smoke. Let us, then, that we may be walking upon the strong rock, leave pride and take to humility. For thus, in this life present shall we find rest, and in the world to come shall possess every blessing by the grace and love toward man of our Lord Jesus Christ¹.

THE GOSPEL.

ST. LUKE ii. 41—52.

“Now His parents went to Jerusalem,” &c.

Now His parents went to Jerusalem every year at the feast of the Passover.

At the feasts of the Hebrews the Law commanded men not only to observe the times, but the place; and so the Lord's parents wished to celebrate the feast of the Passover at Jerusalem^m.

But it may be asked, How could His parents go up all the years of Christ's childhood to Jerusalem, if they were prevented from going there by fear of Archelaus? This question might be easily answered, had some one of the Evangelists mentioned how long Archelaus reigned. But it was also possible that on the feast-day, amid so great a crowd, they might secretly go and soon return again, at the same time that they feared to remain there on other days, and so neither be wanting in religious duties by neglecting the feast, nor leave themselves open to detection by a constant abode there. But now, since all have been silent as to the length of Archelaus' reign, it is plain that when Luke

¹ St. Chrysostom in loc.

^m St. Chrysostom, Cat.

As they were accustomed to go up every year to Jerusalem, we are to understand that to have been when Archelaus was no longer to be fearedⁿ.

And when He was twelve years old, they went up to Jerusalem, after the custom of the feast. And when they had fulfilled the days, as they returned, the Child Jesus was left behind in Jerusalem; and Joseph and His mother knew not of it. But they, supposing Him to have been in the company, went a day's journey, and they sought Him among their kinsfolk and acquaintance. And when they found Him not, they turned back again to Jerusalem, seeking Him. And it came to pass, that after three days they found Him in the Temple.

He is not found as soon as sought; for Jesus was not amongst His kinsfolk and relations, among those who were joined to Him in the flesh; nor can He be found in the company of the multitude. Learn where those who seek Him find Him. Not everywhere, but in the temple; and do thou then seek Jesus in the temple of God. Seek Him in the Church, and seek Him among the masters who are in the temple; for if thou so seek Him thou wilt find Him. They found Him, not among His kinsfolk, for human relations could not comprehend the Son of God; not among His acquaintance, for He passes far beyond all human knowledge and understanding. Where, then, do they find Him? In the temple. If at any time thou seek the Son of God, seek Him first in the temple. Thither go up, and verily thou shalt find Christ, the Word, and the Wisdom, that is, the Son of God^o.

He is found after three days in the Temple, indicating, that after the three days of His triumphant passion, He, who was believed to be dead, should rise again, and manifest Himself to our faith, seated in heaven with divine glory^p.

They found Him in the Temple, sitting in the midst of the doctors, both hearing them, and asking them questions.

ⁿ St. Augustine, Cat.

^o Origen, Cat.

^p St. Ambrose, Cat.

Because He was the Son of God, He is found in the midst of the doctors, enlightening and instructing them. But, because He was a little child, He is found amongst them, not teaching, but asking questions; asking, not that He might learn, but that asking, He might instruct. For from the same source of learning is derived both the power of asking and of answering wisely, as it follows.

All that heard Him were astonished at His understanding and answers^a.

The Lord truly did no miracle in His Childhood, yet St. Luke mentions this one fact, which made men look with wonder upon Him^r.

When the Lord Jesus, as to His human nature, was twelve years old, (for as to His divine nature, He is before all times and without time,) He tarried behind them in the Temple, and disputed with the elders, and they wondered at His doctrine. And His parents, who were returning from Jerusalem, sought Him among their company, among those, that is, who were journeying with them. And when they found Him not, they returned in trouble to Jerusalem, and found Him disputing in the Temple with the elders, when He was, as I said, twelve years old. But what wonder, the Word of God is never silent, though it is not always heard. He is found, then, in the Temple, and His mother says to Him, *Why hast Thou thus dealt with us? Behold, Thy father and I have sought Thee sorrowing. And He said unto them, Wist ye not that I must be about My Father's business?* This He said, for that the Son of God was in the temple of God. For that temple was not Joseph's, but God's^s.

The holy Virgin knew that He was not the son of Joseph, and yet calls her husband His father, according to the belief of the Jews. But why sought they Him sorrowing? Was it that He might have perished or been lost? It could not be. What should cause

^a Origen, Cat.

^r St. Chrysostom, Cat.

^s St. Augustine, N. T.

them to dread the loss of Him whom they knew to be the Lord? As you, whenever you read the Scriptures, search out their meaning with pains, not because you suppose them to have erred, or to contain anything incorrect, but because you are anxious to find the truth which they have inherent in them; so they sought Jesus, not as suspecting Him of weakness, but fearing lest perchance He, leaving them, should have returned to heaven, thither to descend when He would. He, then, who seeks Jesus, must go about it not carelessly and idly, as many seek Him, who never find Him; but with labour and sorrow^t.

And He said unto them, How is it that ye sought Me? Wist ye not that I must be about My Father's business? And they understood not the saying which He spake unto them.

There are in Christ two generations, the one that of His Father, the other, that of His mother. That of the Father, divine; but that of the mother, which descends to our labour and usage, and therefore those things which take place beyond nature, beyond age, beyond custom, are not to be ascribed to human, but to divine powers. On another occasion, His mother impels to a mystery; here, His mother is reproved because she still requires things which are human^u.

And He went down with them, and came to Nazareth, and was subject unto them. The world was subject unto Christ, and Christ was subject to His parents^x.

But His mother kept all these sayings in her heart.

She was suspecting something more than of man, wherefore she preserved all His words in her heart, not as of those of a child of twelve years of age, but of Him who was conceived by the Holy Ghost^y.

And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man.

He had humbled Himself in taking the form of a servant, and in that power in which He had humbled

^t Origen, Cat.

^u St. Ambrose.

^x Aug., N. T.

^y Origen, Cat.

Himself He increases. He had appeared weak, because He had taken to Himself a weak body, and on that account He again is strengthened. The Son of God had emptied Himself, and therefore He is again filled with wisdom^a.

Not because He is the Word, but because He is made man, He is said to receive increase. For if He really increased after that He was made flesh, as having before existed imperfect, why, then, do we give Him thanks as having become incarnate for us? But how, if He is the true Wisdom, can He be increased? Or how can He, who gives grace to others, be Himself advanced in grace? Again: if, hearing that the Word humbled Himself, no one is offended (thinking slightly of the true God), but rather marvels at His compassion, how is it not absurd to be offended at hearing that He increases? As He was humbled for us, so for us He increased, that we, who have fallen through sin, might increase in Him. For whatever concerns us Christ Himself has truly undertaken for us, that He might restore us to a better state. And mark what he says: not that the Word, but, Jesus increases; that you should not suppose that the pure Word increases, but the Word made flesh. But He is said to increase in His human nature, not as if that nature which was perfect from the beginning received increase, but that by degrees it was manifested. For the law of nature brooks not that man should have higher faculties than the age of his body permits. The Word, then (made man), was perfect, as being the power and wisdom of the Father; but because something was to be yielded to the habits of our nature, lest He should be counted strange by those who saw Him, He manifested Himself as man with a body gradually advancing in growth, and was daily thought wiser by those who saw and heard Him^a.

^a Origen; (in Williams on the Nativity.)

^a St. Cyril, Cat. Aur.

THE SECOND SUNDAY AFTER THE EPIPHANY.

THE EPISTLE.

ROMANS xii. 6—16.

“Having then gifts,” &c.

Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, whether prophecy, let us prophesy according to the proportion of faith.

Paul here endeavours to make his hearers labour more earnestly, by shewing that it is they themselves who give occasion for their receiving more or less. He says indeed that the grace is given by God, in order to humble the proud; but he says further that the beginnings lie with themselves, in order to rouse the careless. This he does in the epistle to the Corinthians also, to produce the same effects; for in saying, “covet earnestly the best gifts^a,” he shews that they were themselves the cause of the difference in what was given; but when he says, “All these things worketh that one and the self-same Spirit, dividing to every man severally as He will^b,” he is proving that those who have received, ought not to be unreasonably elated. Again, to rouse those who have become careless, he says, *Whether prophecy, let us prophesy according to the proportion of faith.* For though it is a grace, yet is it not poured forth at random: but framing its measure according to the recipients, it alloweth as much to flow as it may find the vessel of faith that is brought capable of containing.

^a 1 Cor. xii. 31.

^b 1 Cor. xii. 11.

Or ministry, let us wait on our ministering ; or he that teacheth, on teaching ; or he that exhorteth, on exhortation.

Apostleship is called a ministry, and every good work done by the aid of the Spirit is a ministry. The word is the name of a peculiar office, but in this place it is used in a general sense ; every good work of the Spirit is a ministry.

He that giveth, let him do it with simplicity ; he that ruleth, with diligence ; he that sheweth mercy, with cheerfulness.

It is not enough to give, but we must give with munificence, (for this constantly answereth to the word simplicity). It is not enough to shew mercy, but it behoves us to do it with liberality and an ungrudging spirit ; or, rather, not merely with an ungrudging spirit, but even with a cheerful and rejoicing spirit, for the not grudging does not amount to rejoicing. Why dost thou bemoan thyself in giving alms ? And why dost thou grieve at shewing mercy, and so lose the advantage of the good deed ? If thou grieveest, thou art not merciful, but cruel and inhuman. If thou grieveest, how wilt thou be able to raise up him that is in sorrow ? It is much if he suspect no ill, even when thou art giving with joy. For since nothing seems to men such a disgrace as to be receiving from others, unless thou by an exceedingly cheerful look removest the suspicion, and shewest that thou art receiving rather than giving, thou wilt cast down the receiver rather than raise him up. This is why Paul says, *he that sheweth mercy, with cheerfulness.* Who that is receiving a kingdom is of sad countenance ? Who that is receiving pardon for his sins continueth dejected ? Think not, then, on the expenditure of money ; but on the increase that cometh of that expenditure. For if he that soweth on earth rejoiceth, though sowing in uncertainty of the return, much more should he sow with rejoicing who farms the heaven. In this way, even though thou give but little,

thou wilt be giving much ; even as how much soever thou givest with a sad countenance, thou wilt have given but a little. Thus the two mites of the widow outweighed many talents, for her spirit was large. But, it may be said, how is it possible for one that lives in extreme poverty, and empties out his all, to do this with a ready mind ? Ask the widow, and thou wilt hear the way, and wilt know that it is not narrow circumstances that make poverty, but the temper of the man. For it is possible in poverty to be munificent, and in wealth to be niggardly. Hence, in giving, Paul looks for simplicity ; and in shewing mercy, for cheerfulness ; and in governing, for diligence. It is not with money only that he wishes us to render assistance to those in want, but with words, and deeds, and in every other way. And to shew how these things may be done aright, he brings in the mother of them all, even love.

Let love be without dissimulation.

If thou hast this, thou wilt not regard the loss of thy money, the labour of thy person, the toil of thy words, thy trouble and thy ministering, but wilt bear all cheerfully. As he does not ask for giving only, but giving with simplicity, so he requires not love only, but love without dissimulation. Then, since there is a love for evil things, such as is that of the intemperate, of the covetous, of the reveller, he cuts off all this by saying, *Abhor that which is evil.* He does not speak of refraining from it, but of *abhorring* it, that is, hating it, and hating it exceedingly. Many who do not evil things still have a desire after them, therefore he says *abhor*. What he wants is to purify the thoughts, and that we should have a mighty enmity and hatred against vice. Do not fancy, he means, because I said, *Love one another*, that I mean you to co-operate in bad actions one with another, for the law which I am laying down is exactly contrary to this. It would have you an alien not from the action only, but even from the inclination

towards vice ; and not only to be an alien from the inclination, but to have an excessive aversion and hatred of it. And Paul is not content even with this abhorrence of vice, but he also urges the practice of virtue. *Cleave to that which is good.* The command to cleave to what is good indicates not only the doing it, but also the being earnestly disposed towards it.

Paul then gives reasons why we ought to love one another.

Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love. Ye are brethren, and have come of the same birth-pangs. Hence, on this head, you ought to love one another. As Moses said to those who were quarrelling in Egypt, “Ye are brethren, why do ye wrong one to another^c?” When Paul is speaking of those without, he says, “If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men^d.” But when he is speaking of his own, he says, *Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love.* For in the one case he only requires abstinence from quarrelling and hatred ; but in the other he requires love, and not merely love, but the love as of kindred. Love must not only be *without dissimulation*, but must be warm and glowing. To what purpose would you love without hypocrisy, and yet not love with warmth ? Wherefore he says, *kindly affectioned one towards another.* Do not wait to be loved by another, but be the first to begin. For so wilt thou reap the wages of his love also.

Having given the reason why we ought to love one another, Paul now tells us the way in which the affection may become lasting. He proceeds, *in honour preferring one another.* This is the way that affection is produced, and also, when produced, is made to abide. There is nothing which so makes friends as the earnest endeavour to overcome our neighbour in honouring him. For love comes of honour, as honour of love.

Fervent in spirit. See how in every instance he aims

^c Exod. ii. 13.

^d Rom. xii. 18.

at the highest degrees; he does not say only give, but with liberality; nor rule only, but rule with diligence; nor shew mercy only, but with cheerfulness; nor honour only, but prefer one another; nor love only, but love without dissimulation; nor refrain from evil things, but hate them; nor hold to what is good, but cleave to it; nor love, but love with brotherly affection; nor be zealous, but be so without backwardness; nor have the Spirit, but have it fervent. For if thou hast these things thou wilt draw the Spirit to thee: and if the Spirit abide with thee, it will fit thee for those things, and the Spirit and love will make all easy to thee.

Serving the Lord. It is possible to serve God in all these ways; for whatsoever thou doest to thy brother, passes on to thy Master^c; and so, counting Himself to have been benefited, He will reckon thy reward accordingly. See to what height he hath raised the spirit of the man that doeth these things. And then to shew how the flame of the Spirit might be kindled, he saith,

Rejoicing in hope, patient in tribulation, continuing instant in prayer. For all these things are fuel for that fire. When he had required the expenditure of money, and personal labour, and good government, and zeal, and teaching, he suppleth the wrestler with love, with the Spirit, through hope. For there is nothing that makes the soul so bold and courageous as a good hope. Then, even before the good thing hoped for can be received, he gives another and a present reward, even patience—*patient in tribulation*. In this life present thou wilt gain a great good from tribulation, that of becoming hardy and tried. After this, he affords yet another help, saying, *Continuing instant in prayer*. Thus, when love maketh all things easy, and the Spirit assisteth, and hope lighteneth, and tribulation maketh thee tried and apt for bearing nobly all things laid upon thee, and when thou hast, along with these, another and a great weapon, namely, *prayer*, with the

• St. Matt. xxv. 40.

aids that come of prayer, what further grievousness can there be in that which he enjoins? Surely none. You see how in every way he gives the wrestler firm footing, and shews that his injunctions may be easily obeyed.

Given to hospitality. He does not say, performing the act, but being given to it; thus instructing us not to wait for those that shall ask it, and shall come to us, but to run to them, and be desirous of finding them.

Thus did Lot, thus did Abraham. Not as we do, if we see a stranger or a poor man,—knitting our brows, and deigning not even to speak to him. And if, after many entreaties we are softened, and bid the servant give him a trifle, we think that we have done our duty. Not so did Abraham, but acted as if himself were a suppliant and a servant, although he did not know whom he was taking under his roof. But we, who are clearly told that when we relieve a poor man it is Christ to whom we give, do not even for this grow tender-hearted.

On this account Abraham is deserving of our admiration, that, before he knew who they were that were come to him, he bid them welcome. Do not thou, then, be curious in thine enquiries, since thou dost receive him in the place of Christ.

Bless them which persecute you: bless, and curse not. Paul does not say, Be not spiteful or revengeful, but requires something far higher. That a wise man might refrain from doing, but this is the work of an angel. He that curseth his persecutor sheweth that he is not pleased at suffering for Christ, but he that blesseth, sheweth great love towards Him. For this cause Christ Himself said, "Rejoice when men speak all manner of evil against you falsely!" Hence, too, it was that the Apostles returned with joy, not from having been evil spoken of only, but also from having been scourged. And besides what I have mentioned, there will be another gain, and that no small one, both the shaming

¹ St. Matt. v. 11, 12.

of your adversaries hereby, and the instructing them by your actions that you are travelling to another life; for if they see thee joyous, and elevated in suffering, they will see clearly that thou hast other and greater hopes than those of this life. If thou dost not rejoice, but weapest and lamentest, how are they to learn that thou art waiting for another life?

Rejoice with them that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep. Since it is possible to bless and not to curse, and yet not to do this out of love, Paul wishes us to be penetrated throughout with the warmth of friendship. This is why he bids us not only to bless, but even to feel compassion for the pains and sufferings of others when we see them fallen into trouble. Yes, it may be said, one can see why he ordered them to join in the sorrows of mourners, but why did he command the opposite, which seems to be a thing of no great importance? Ah! but it requires more of a high Christian temper to rejoice with them that do rejoice, than to weep with them that weep. Nature itself teaches the latter, for there is none so hard-hearted as not to weep over him that is in calamity; but the former requires a noble spirit, not only to abstain from envy, but even to feel pleasure at the prosperity of another. And this is why Paul placed it first. There is nothing that binds us so firmly in love, as sharing both joy and pain one with another. Do not then, because thou art far from difficulty thyself, keep aloof from thy neighbour when he is in trouble. When he is ill-treated, thou oughtest to make his calamity thine own. Share, then, in his tears, that thou mayest lighten his distress. Share in his joy, that thou mayest increase his happiness, and strengthen love. Thou art indeed of service to thyself rather than to him in so doing; by weeping with him thou makest thyself merciful, and by sharing his joy thou purgest thyself from envy and grudging.

Be of the same mind one towards another. Mind not high things, but condescend to men of low estate.

Paul means here by those of low estate, not merely

the lowly-minded, but those of a low rank, and of whom men are apt to think with scorn.

What does he mean by *be of the same mind one towards another*? Has a poor man come into thy house? be like him in thy bearing, do not put on any pompous air on account of thy riches. There are no rich and poor in Christ. Be not thou ashamed of him because of his outward dress, but receive him because of his inward faith. If thou seest him in sorrow, do not disdain to comfort him; nor, if thou see him in prosperity, feel ashamed to share his happiness; but be of the same mind in his case that thou wouldst be in thine own. For it is said, *Be of the same mind one towards another*. For instance, if thou regardest thyself as a great man, regard him as one likewise. Dost thou consider him mean and little? pass this same sentence upon thyself, thus laying aside all inequality. And how is this to be done? By casting aside thy proud temper. Wherefore he proceeds: *Mind not high things, but condescend to men of low estate*. That is, bring thyself down to their humble condition, ride or walk with them, do not be humbled in mind only, but help them; reach forth thy hand to them, not by means of others, but in thine own person, as a father taking care of a child, as the head taking care of the members ^s.

THE GOSPEL.

ST. JOHN ii. 1—11.

“And the third day there was,” &c.

And the third day there was a marriage in Cana of Galilee, and the mother of Jesus was there; and both Jesus was called, and His disciples, to the marriage.

He who disdained not to “take upon Him the form of a servant ^h,” would much less disdain to be present

^s St. Chrysostom.

^h Phil. ii. 7.

at the marriage of servants. He who refused not to sit down with publicans and sinners, would much less refuse to sit down with those marriage guests.

And when they wanted wine, the mother of Jesus saith unto Him, They have no wine.

Here it is worth while to enquire whence it came into His mother's mind to imagine anything great of her Son; for He had as yet done no miracle, since the Evangelist saith, *This beginning of miracles did Jesus in Cana of Galilee.*

Now if any say that this is not a sufficient proof that this was the beninning of His miracles, because it is added, *in Cana of Galilee*, allowing it to have been the first done in that place, but yet not the first performed anywhere, (for that He might have done others elsewhere,) we will answer in the words of John the Baptist: "And I knew Him not; but that He should be made manifest to Israel, therefore am I come, baptizing with water¹." Now if He had wrought miracles at an early age, the Israelites would not have required another to declare Him. For He who by His miracles was afterwards made known not to those in Judæa only, but also to those in Syria and beyond, who did this in three years, (rather who needed not even those three years to manifest Himself, for from the first His fame went abroad,)—He, I say, who in so short a time so shone forth by the multitude of His miracles, that His name was known to all, would have been little likely to have escaped notice till this time, if, when a child, He had wrought miracles.

"How, then, came it into the mind of His mother to imagine any great thing of Him?" He was now beginning to reveal Himself, and was plainly discovered by the witness of John, and by what he had said to his disciples. And before all this, the Conception itself and all its attendant circumstances, had inspired her with a very great opinion of the Child.

“Why, then, did she not speak before?” Because, as I said, it was now at last that He was beginning to manifest Himself. Before this time He lived as one of the many, and therefore His mother had not confidence to say any such thing to Him; but when she heard that John had come on His account, and had borne such witness to Him, as he did; and that He had disciples; after that she took confidence, and called Him, and said, when they wanted wine, *They have no wine*, for she desired both to do them a favour, and through her Son to render herself more conspicuous. Perhaps, too, she had some human feelings like His brethren, when they said, “Shew Thyself to the world^k,” desiring to gain credit from His miracles. Therefore He answered somewhat vehemently, saying, *Woman, what have I to do with thee? Mine hour is not yet come.*

To prove that He greatly respected His mother, hear Luke relate how He was *subject* to His parents, and our own Evangelist declare how He had forethought for her at the very time of the Crucifixion. For where parents cause no impediment or hindrance in things belonging to God, it is our bounden duty to give way to them, and there is great danger in not doing so; but when they require anything unreasonably, or cause hindrance in any spiritual matter, it is unsafe to obey. Therefore He answered thus in this place, and again elsewhere, “Who is My mother, or My brethren^l?” because they did not yet think rightly of Him: and she, because she had borne Him, claimed, according to the custom of other mothers, to direct Him in all things, when she ought to have revered and worshipped Him. This, then, was the reason why He answered as He did on that occasion. For if He cared for others, and used every means to implant in them a becoming opinion of Himself, much more would he do so in the case of His mother. He could not have

^k St. John vii. 4.

^l St. Mark iii. 31.

led up her thoughts from His present lowliness to His future exaltation, had she expected that she should always be honoured by Him, as by a son, and not that He was come as her Master.

It was, then, from this motive that He said, *Woman, what have I to do with thee?* And also for another reason, not less pressing. What was that? It was that His miracles might not be suspected. The request ought to have come from those who needed, not from His mother. And why so? Because what is done at the request of one's friends, great though it be, often causes offence to the spectators; but when they who have the need make the request, the miracle is free from suspicion, the praise unmixed, the benefit great. And so this was a reason why He rebuked her on that occasion, saying, *Woman, what have I to do with thee?* instructing her for the future not to do the like. Because, though He was careful to honour His mother, yet He cared much more for the salvation of her soul, and for the doing good to the many, to which end He had taken flesh upon Him.

These, then, were the words, not of one speaking rudely to His mother, but acting according to a wise dispensation; so bringing her into a right frame of mind, and providing that the miracles should be attended with that honour which was meet.

Mine hour is not yet come.

These words are not used in this place only, but in others also; for the same Evangelist says, "No man laid hands on Him, because His hour was not yet come^m;" and again, "The hour is come; glorify Thy Sonⁿ." What, then, do the words mean? I have brought together more instances, that I may give one explanation of all; and what is that explanation? Christ did not say, *Mine hour is not yet come*, as being subject to the necessity of seasons, or the observance of an hour. How can He be so, who is the Maker of

^m St. John vii. 30.

ⁿ St. John xvii. 1.

seasons, and Creator of the times and the ages? To what, then, did He allude? He desires to shew this; that He works all things at their right season, not doing all at once; because confusion and disorder would have ensued, if He had mixed all together,—His birth, His resurrection, and His coming to judgment. Observe this; Creation was to be, but not all at once; man and woman were to be created, yet not even these together; mankind were to be condemned to death, and there was to be a resurrection, yet the interval between the two was to be great; the Law was to be given, but not grace with it; each was to be dispensed at its proper time. Now Christ was not subject to the necessity of seasons, but rather Himself settled their order, since He is their Creator; and therefore He saith in this place, *Mine hour is not yet come*; and His meaning is, that as yet He was not manifested to the many. Not His disciples, not even His mother, nor His brethren, knew Him as they ought; for even after His many miracles, the Evangelist says of His brethren, “For neither did His brethren believe in Him^o.” Neither did those at the wedding know Him, or in their need they would certainly have come to and intreated Him; therefore He saith, *Mine hour is not yet come*. That is, I am not yet known to the company, nor are they even aware that the wine has failed. Let them first be sensible of this; I ought not to have been told it by thee. Thou art My mother, and renderest the miracle suspicious: they who wanted the wine should have come and besought Me. Not that I need this, but that they might with an entire assent accept the miracle. For one who knows that he is in need, is grateful when he obtains assistance, but one who has not a sense of his need, will never have a full and clear sense of the benefit.

Why, then, after He had said, *Mine hour is not yet come*, and given her a denial, did He what His mother

• St. John vii. 5.

desired? Chiefly it was that they who opposed Him, and thought that He was subject to the hour, might have sufficient proof that He was subject to no hour; for had He been so, how could He, before the proper hour was come, have done what He did. And in the next place He did it to honour His mother, that He might not seem entirely to contradict, and shame her who bare Him.

Whatsoever He saith unto you, do it.

She knew that His refusal proceeded not from want of power, but from humility, and that He might not seem without cause to hurry to the miracle. Therefore she gave this charge to the servants.

And there were set there six water-pots of stone, after the manner of the purifying of the Jews, containing two or three firkins apiece. Jesus saith unto them, Fill the water-pots with water, and they filled them up to the brim.

It is not without a reason that the Evangelist says, *after the manner of the purifying of the Jews*, but in order that none of the unbelievers might suspect that lees having been left in the vessels, and water having been poured upon and mixed with them, a very weak wine had been made. Therefore he says, *after the manner of the purifying of the Jews*, to shew that these vessels were never receptacles for wine.

And why was it that He did not the miracle before they filled them, which would have been by far more marvellous; for it is one thing to change given matter to a different quality, and another to create matter out of nothing. The latter would, indeed, have been more wonderful, but would not have seemed so credible to the many, and therefore He often purposely lessens the greatness of His miracles that they may be the more readily received. But why, says one, did He not Himself produce the water which He afterwards shewed to be wine, instead of bidding the servants bring it? For the very same reason; and also that He might have those who drew it to witness that what had been

effected was no delusion; since, if any had been inclined to be shameless, those who ministered might have said to them, "We drew the water, we filled the vessels."

When they had filled the water-pots, He said, *Draw out now, and bear unto the governor of the feast. And they bare it. When the ruler of the feast had tasted the water that was made wine, and knew not whence it was, (but the servants which drew the water knew,) the governor of the feast called the bridegroom, and saith unto him, Every man at the beginning doth set forth good wine, and when men have well drunk, then that which is worse: but thou hast kept the good wine until now.*

Why did not the governor call the servants, and so would the miracle have been revealed? Because Jesus had not Himself revealed what had been done, but desired that the power of His miracles should be known gradually, little by little. And suppose that it had been mentioned then, the servants who related it would not have been believed, but would have been thought mad to bear such testimony to One who at that time seemed but a mere man; and although they knew the certainty of the thing, (for they were not likely to disbelieve the witness of their own hands), yet were not they sufficient to convince others. And so Christ did not reveal it to all, but to him who was best able to understand that which was done, reserving the clearer revelation to a future time, when, after the manifestation of other miracles, this also would be credible.

That it was wine then, and the best of wine that had been made, not the servants only, but the bridegroom and the ruler of the feast would testify; and that it was made by Christ, those would testify who drew the water; so that, although the miracle was not then revealed, yet it could not in the end be passed over in silence, so many and constraining testimonies had He provided for the future. When He was about to

heal the nobleman's son, the Evangelist has shewn that this miracle had already become more clearly known; for it was chiefly because the nobleman had become acquainted with the miracle that he called upon Him, as John incidentally shews when he says, "Jesus came again into Cana of Galilee, where He made the water wine ^p."

This beginning of miracles did Jesus in Cana of Galilee. I told you that there are some who say that this is not the beginning, but that the words shew that it was the beginning that He made *in Cana*. But on these points I would not venture to assert anything positively. I have before shewn that He began His miracles after His Baptism, and wrought no miracles before it; but whether of the miracles done after His Baptism, this or some other was the first, it seems to me unnecessary to determine.

And manifested forth His glory.

How did He manifest forth His glory? For only the servants, the ruler of the feast, and the bridegroom, not the greater number of those present, gave heed to what was done. If not at the time, yet afterwards, would all present hear of the miracle, for even unto the present day it is celebrated. But at the time He manifested it, at least on His own part.

And His disciples believed on Him. His disciples even before this regarded Him with wonder. His doctrine and prophetic powers were sufficient, without miracles, to cause wonder in the souls of His hearers, if only they took heed to what He said with a right disposition, having minds well affected towards Him ^q.

The miracle truly of our Lord Jesus Christ by which He made the water wine, is not marvellous to those who know that it was wrought by God: for He who made wine on that day at the marriage feast, in those

^p St. John iv. 46.

^q St. Chrysostom.

six water-pots which He commanded to be filled with water, the Same every year does the like in vines. For as what the servants put into the water-pots was changed into wine by the operation of the Lord, just so what the clouds pour forth is changed into wine by the operation of the same Lord. But at the latter we do not marvel, because it happens every year; by constant use it hath lost our wonder, although indeed it challenges greater consideration than that which was done in the water-pots. For who that considers the works of God, by which this whole world is governed and administered, is not amazed and overwhelmed by the miracles? The force and virtue of a single grain of any kind of seed is a great thing, a thing which awes him who considers it. But forasmuch as men, intent on another object, have lost the consideration of the works of God, by which they should daily ascribe praise to Him as the Creator, therefore God hath, as it were, reserved to Himself certain extraordinary and unwonted actions, that by marvels He might, so to speak, rouse men from their slumber to worship Him. A dead man rose again, men marvelled: many are born every day, and no one marvels. If we consider the matter more thoughtfully, it is a greater miracle for one to be who was not, than for one to come again to life who has been. Yet the same God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, doeth all these things by His Word. Not only did He create, He also governs. The former miracles He did by His Word which was God with God; the latter miracles by the Same, His Word Incarnate, and for our sakes made Man. As we marvel at these things which have been done by the Man Jesus, let us marvel at those which have been done by the God Jesus. By the God Jesus were made heaven and earth, and the sea, all the garniture of the heavens, and the prolific fruitfulness of the sea; all those things which come within the range of the eye were made by Jesus, God. And we behold these,

and, if His Spirit is in us, they please us in such wise that we praise the Author of them, not in such wise that, turning to the works we turn from their Author, as it were turning our faces to the things made, and our backs to Him who made them^r.

^r St. Augustine.

THE THIRD SUNDAY AFTER THE EPIPHANY.

THE EPISTLE.

ROMANS xii. 16—21.

“Be not wise,” &c.

Be not wise in your own conceits. That is, do not think that you are sufficient for yourselves. The Scripture says in another place, “Woe to them that are wise in their own eyes, and prudent in their own sight^a.” By this Paul undermines the foundations of pride, and reduces conceit and boasting. For there is nothing that so elates men, and makes them feel themselves to be different from others, as the notion that they are sufficient for themselves. Wherefore God hath placed us in need one of another: and if thou think thyself not to be in need of thy brother, thou art indeed the most foolish and the weakest of men. For a man of this kind puts himself out of the way of all succour, and run into what error he may, he will have the advantage neither of correction nor of pardon; he will provoke God by his pride, and will run into many sins. For it is the case, aye, and often, that a wise man does not perceive what is wanted, when a man of less shrewdness hits upon it. This happened with Moses and his father-in-law, with Saul and his son, with Isaac and Rebecca. Do not then suppose that you are lowered by needing the help of another, for on the contrary it raises you, it makes you the stronger, and the nobler, and the more secure.

^a Isa. v. 21.

Recompense to no man evil for evil.

If thou findest fault with one who devises mischief against thee, why dost thou lay thyself open to the same charge? If he did amiss, why dost thou not avoid imitating him? And observe that Paul makes no distinction here, but lays down one law for all. He does not say, *Recompense not evil, to the believer, but to no man*, be he heathen, or whatever he may be.

Provide things honest in the sight of all men. That is, 'Let your light shine before men^b.' Not that we are to live for vanity, but that we are not to give those that have a mind to it a handle against us. Wherefore in another place he says, "Give none offence, neither to the Jews, nor to the Gentiles, nor to the Church of God^c." And in what follows he makes his meaning clear by saying, *If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men.* For there are cases in which it is not possible, as, for instance, when we have to speak concerning religion, or to contend for those who are wronged. His meaning is nearly this: Do thine own part, giving none occasion of strife or contention either to Jew or Gentiles. But if you see the cause of religion suffering, prize not concord above truth, but stand bravely, even unto death. And even then be not at enmity in your soul, be not estranged in temper, but let your quarrel be only as to things, not persons. This is the import of, *As much as in you lieth, live peaceably with all men.*

Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath. For it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord.

Unto what wrath? The wrath of God. For what the injured person most desires, is to see himself in the enjoyment of revenge; and this Paul gives him in full measure, saying, if thou dost not avenge thyself, God will be thine Avenger. Leave it, he means, to Him to follow up thy wrongs; and to give further comfort, he brings forward the quotation, and after winning

^b St. Matt. v. 16.

^c 1 Cor. x. 32.

the injured man over in this way, he then demands a higher Christian heroism of him, and says,

Therefore if thine enemy hunger, feed him ; if he thirst, give him drink ; for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head. Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good.

“What, am I telling you about keeping at peace? Nay, rather, it is active kindness that I enjoin on you;” for he says, give him to eat, and give him to drink. Then, as this command was a very difficult one, he adds, *For in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire upon his head.* This, he says, to humble the one by fear, and to make the other ready-minded through hope of a retribution; for he that is wronged when he is weak, is not so eager after any advantages to himself, as for vengeance on the person who has vexed him. What, then, he is longing for, Paul gives him first; and when the poison is removed, he then gives advice of a higher tone, saying, *Be not overcome of evil.* For Paul knew that if the enemy were a very wild beast, he would not continue an enemy when he had been fed; and he knew that if the man injured were ever so poor of soul, still, when feeding him, and giving him to drink, he would no longer crave for his punishment. Hence, out of confidence in the result of such kind action, Paul does not simply threaten, but even dwells upon the proffered vengeance. He does not say, “Thou shalt take vengeance,” but, *Thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head.* Then, he farther declares him victor, by saying, *Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good.* And in this he gives a hint, that the feeding and giving to drink is not to be done with the intention of revenge, since, still to cherish a grudge would be to *be overcome of evil.* He does not, however, find it advisable to say it fully at once; but when he has disburdened the man of his anger, then he goes on to say, *overcome evil with good.* For this would be a victory. When you return insult for insult, you are defeated, overcome, not by a man, but what is far more disgraceful, by the slavish

passion^s of anger. But if you are silent, then you conquer.

And if it is the esteem of the multitude that you look for, of this, too, you will have a larger share. We have a kind of sympathy with those who are the sufferers, but when we see that they strike not in return, but even submit, then, we not only pity them, but even feel admiration for them.

Here, then, I find reason to lament, that we, who might both have the things of the present time, if we listened as we ought to Christ's laws, and also attain to the things to come, fail of both of these, by our disobedience to His words, and by our perverse views of life. Christ has given us laws upon all these points for our good, and has shewn us what makes us to have a good name, and what brings us to disgrace. If, then, He both knoweth and careth, why dost thou quarrel with Him, and wish to go another road? For conquering by doing ill is one of the devil's laws. Hence, in the Olympic games which were celebrated to him^d, it is thus that the competitors conquer. But in Christ's race this is not the rule about the prize, for on the contrary, the law is, that the person smitten, not the person smiting, shall be crowned. For such is the character of His race, that all common regulations are reversed; so that it is not in the victory only, but also in the manner of the victory, that the marvel is the greater. Now when that which on the one side is the sign of defeat, is on the other shewn to be productive of victory, this is the power of God, this the race of heaven, this the spectacle of angels.

I know that ye are thoroughly warmed now, and are become as soft as any wax; but when ye go hence, it will all run abroad to waste. This is why I sorrow, that what we say, we do not shew by our deeds, even though we should thereby become the greatest gainers. For

^d The Fathers generally believed that the Devils were connected with idol worship, and this formed an essential part of the ceremonies in the Olympic games.

if we shew gentleness of temper, we shall be proof against everything; and no man, either small or great, shall be able to hurt us. If any one abuseth thee he hath not hurt thee at all, but hath severely hurt himself; and if he wrong thee, the injury will be to him who does the wrong. But why do I talk of evil speaking, and of wrong? for even were he to whet his sword against thee, and stain his right hand in thy life-blood, yet is it not thee that he hath harmed, but himself. And he will witness what I say, who was first cut off thus by a brother's hand. For he departed to the haven which is without a billow, having gained a deathless glory; but the other lived a life worse than any death, groaning and trembling, and bearing about in his body the accusation of his deed. Not his likeness, but that other's let us follow. For he that hath ill done to him, endureth not an evil that taketh up its constant abode with him, since he is not the parent of it; but as he received it from others, he turns it to good by his patient endurance. But he that doeth ill hath the well-springs of mischief in himself.

Knowing all this, then, let us fit ourselves for bearing ills, even that we may be freed from bearing ills, and may attain to the blessings to come, which that we may all attain to, God grant, by His love and grace towards man^e.

THE GOSPEL.

ST. MATTHEW viii. 1—13.

“When He was come down,” &c.

When He was come down from the mountain . . . there came a leper . . . saying, Lord, if Thou wilt, Thou canst make me clean.

Great was the understanding and the faith of him who so drew near; for he did not interrupt the teaching, nor break through the audience, but awaited the

proper time, and approached the Lord when He was come down, and that not carelessly, but with much earnestness; and at His knees he beseeches Him[†], (as another Evangelist saith,) and with true faith and a right belief concerning Him. For neither did he say, "If Thou ask it of God," nor, "If Thou pray," but, *If Thou wilt, Thou canst make me clean*. Nor did he say, "Lord, cleanse me," but he leaves all to Him, and makes the recovery depend on Him, testifying that all the authority belongs to Him.

What, then, if the leper's belief was mistaken? It had surely been meet to do away with it, to reprove and set it right. Did Christ, then, do this? By no means, but on the contrary, He established and confirmed it. To this end He saith not, Be thou cleansed, but, *I will; be thou clean*. That the doctrine might no longer be a thing only surmised by the suppliant, but approved by Himself. Not so the Apostles, but when the whole people were in amazement, they said, "Why look ye so earnestly on us, as though by our own power and holiness we had made this man to walk[‡]." But the Lord, though He at other times spoke modestly, and beneath His own glory, here, to establish the doctrine, saith to them who were amazed at His authority, *I will; be thou clean*.

And it was not that He said this and did it not; but the work immediately followed. Whereas, if He had not spoken rightly, but His words had been a blasphemy, the work would have been arrested. Now, however, Nature herself gave way at His command, and that speedily, as was meet.

He did not merely say, *I will, be thou clean*, but He also put forth His hand and touched him: a thing especially worthy of enquiry. For wherefore, when cleansing him by will and word, did He add the

[†] St. Mark i. 40; comp. St. Luke v. 12.

[‡] Acts iii. 12.

touch of His Hand? For no other end, it seems to me, but that He might signify that He is not subject to the Law, but is set over it, and that to the clean henceforth nothing is unclean. We see that Elisha did not so much as see Naaman, but, though he knew that Naaman was offended at his not coming out and touching him, he, observing the strictness of the Law, abides at home, and sends him to Jordan to wash. Whereas the Lord, to signify that He heals not as a servant, but as absolute Master, doth even touch. For His Hand became not unclean from the leprosy, but the leprous body was rendered clean by His holy Hand.

Having healed the leper's body, Christ bids him, *Tell no man, but shew thyself to the priest, and offer the gift that Moses commanded, for a testimony unto them.*

He bids him, *Tell no man*, teaching us to avoid boasting and vain-glory. And yet He well knew that the leper would not obey, but would proclaim his Benefactor; nevertheless, He doth His own part.

How is it, then, that on another occasion He bids tell of the cure? Not as opposing or contradicting Himself, but as teaching men to be grateful. For neither did He then give command to proclaim Himself, but to "give glory to God^h;" by means of the one leper, training us to keep clear of pride and vain-glory; by means of the other, to be thankful and grateful; instructing us on every occasion to offer to the Lord the praise of all good things that we receive.

But wherefore did He command him to shew himself to the priest, and to offer a gift? In order to fulfil the Lawⁱ. For He did not in every instance set it aside, nor in every instance keep it; but sometimes He did the one, sometimes the other; by the one, making way for the higher rule of life that was about to come; by the other, checking for a while the insolent spirit of the Jews, and condescending to their infirmity.

^h St. Luke xvii. 18.

ⁱ Lev. xiv. 1, 32.

The gift that Moses commanded. He said not, Which I command, but for a time refers him to the Law, by every means stopping their mouths. Thus, lest they should say He had seized upon the priest's office, though he performed the work Himself, yet the approving it He entrusted to them, and made them sit as judges of His miracles. So far am I, He saith, from rising up against Moses or the Priests, that I direct the objects of my favour to submit themselves unto them.

And when Jesus was entered into Capernaum, there came unto him a Centurion, beseeching Him, and saying, Lord, my servant lieth at home sick of the palsy, grievously tormented.

The leper came unto Him when He was come down from the mountain, but this Centurion when He was entered into Capernaum; wherefore, then, did neither the one nor the other go up into the mountain? Not out of remissness, for indeed the faith of both was fervent, but in order not to interrupt His teaching.

Having come unto Him, the Centurion saith, *My servant lieth at home sick of the palsy, grievously tormented.* Now some say that it was by way of excuse that he mentioned the reason why he had not brought him; for it was not possible, he would say, to bring him, paralyzed as he was and tormented, and at his last gasp; for that he was at the point to die, Luke saith. But I say that this was a sign of his having great faith, faith much greater than theirs who let one down through the roof, for because he knew for certain that a mere command was enough for the raising up of the patient, he thought it superfluous to bring him.

What, then, doth Jesus? What He had in no case done before, He doth here. For whereas He was used to follow the wish of His supplicants, here He rather springs towards it, and offers not only to heal him, but also to go to the house. And this He doth that we

might see the piety of the Centurion; for, if He had not made this offer, but had said, Go thy way, let thy servant be healed, we should not have known of this.

What, then, saith the Centurion? *I am not worthy that thou shouldst come under my roof, but speak the word only, and my servant shall be healed.*

See this man also, how, like the leper, he hath the right belief concerning Christ. For neither did this one say, "entreat," nor "pray, and beseech," but, "command only."

For I am a man under authority. That is, Thou art God, and I am man; I, under authority, but Thou not under authority. If I, therefore, being a man, and under authority, can do so much, far more canst Thou do, both as being God, and as being not under authority. For if I, being equal in honour to those whom I command, and under authority, yet by reason of the trifling superiority of my rank am able to do such great things, and no man withstands me, but what I command that is done, much more wilt Thou be able to do this.

"And what," saith one, "if the Centurion did suspect this to be so? The question is, whether Christ affirmed and ratified as much." Thou speakest well, and very sensibly. Let us, then, look to this, and we shall find that what happened in the case of the leper, happened here likewise. For when the Centurion had spoken such words, and had testified to Christ's so great prerogative, Christ, so far from blaming, did even approve this, and did somewhat more than approve; for the Evangelist hath not only said that He praised the saying, but that shewing a degree of earnestness in His praise, He even marvelled, and that in the presence of the whole people, setting the Centurion as an example to the rest that they should emulate him.

Mark, I pray thee, how this man signified that Christ is able to overcome even death as a slave, and as a Master to command it. For in saying, *come, and*

he cometh, and go, and he goeth, he expresses this, "If thou shouldst command his end not to come upon him, it will not come. Seest thou how great was his faith? For here is one who hath made evident already, what was afterwards to be manifest to all, that Christ hath the power both of death and of life; and leadeth down to the gates of hell, and bringeth up again."

When Jesus heard it, He marvelled, and said to them that followed, Verily I say unto you, I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel.

To have high thoughts concerning Christ is especially of faith, and tends to obtain the kingdom and all other blessings. For His praise went beyond words; He not only restored the sick man in recompense of the Centurion's faith, but weaves for the Centurion a glorious crown, and promises him great gifts, saying on this wise, *Many shall come from the east and west, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven. But the children of the kingdom shall be cast out.*

Nevertheless, though having such great faith, the Centurion still accounted himself unworthy. Christ, however, shewing that he was worthy to have Him enter into his house, did yet greater things, marveling at him, proclaiming him, and giving more than he had asked. For he came seeking for his servant health of body, but went away having himself received a kingdom.

Seest thou how the saying was already fulfilled, "Seek ye the kingdom of heaven, and all these things shall be added unto you." For because he evinced great faith and humility, Christ both gave him heaven and added unto him the health of his servant.

And not by this alone did He honour him, but also by signifying upon the casting out of whom, he was brought in. For now, from this time forth, He proceeds to make known to all, that salvation is by faith, not by works of the Law. And this is why, not to Jews

only, but to Gentiles also, the gift so given shall be proffered, and to the latter rather than to the former. "For think not," saith He, "that so hath it come to pass in regard to this man alone, nay, so shall it be in regard to the whole world." And this He said prophesying of the Gentiles, and holding out good hopes to them. For there were some from Galilee of the Gentiles following Him, and he said it on the one hand, not letting the Gentiles despair, and on the other putting down the proud spirit of the Jews. Both the punishment of the one, and the joy of the other, is doubled. Of the one, not only that they fell away, but that they fell away from their own; of the other, not only that they attained, but that they attained that of which they had no expectation. And there is a third point, that the one received what pertained to the other. Christ calls them *children of the kingdom*, for whom the kingdom had been prepared, which, more than all, was likely to gall them: in that having pointed to them as being in the bosom of the Patriarch by His offer and promise, after all He put them out.

Then, because what He had said was but a statement, He confirms it by the miracle; as indeed he establishes the miracles in their turn, by the subsequent accomplishment of the prediction. He accordingly who disbelieves in the health which the servant then received, let him learn to believe it from the prophecy which hath this day come to pass. And again, the prophecy, even before the event, was made credible to all by the sign which then took place.

And Jesus said unto the Centurion, Go thy way, and as thou hast believed, so be it done unto thee. And his servant was healed in the self-same hour^k.

^k St. Chrysostom.

THE FOURTH SUNDAY AFTER THE EPIPHANY.

THE EPISTLE.

ROMANS xiii. 1—7.

“Let every soul be subject,” &c.

Let every soul be subject to the higher powers.

Of this matter Paul makes great account in other epistles also, setting subjects under their rulers as household servants are under their masters. And this he does to shew that it was not for the subversion of the commonwealth that Christ introduced His laws, but for its better regulation; and to teach men not to be engaging in needless and unprofitable wars. He does not say merely, “obey,” but, *be subject*; and the first claim which such an enactment has upon us, and the consideration which suiteth with the mind of the faithful, is, that all this is of God’s appointment.

For there is no power but of God. “What say you?” may be asked, “Is, then, every ruler elected by God?” I say not this, he answers, nor am I now speaking about individual rulers, but about the thing itself. That there should be offices of rule, and that some should rule, and others be ruled, is the work of God’s wisdom. Hence he does not say, for there is no *ruler* but of God; but there is no *power but of God*; and the powers that be, are ordained of God. For, since equality of honour leads to strife, He hath made many modes of government and forms of subjection; as, for instance, that of man and wife, of son and father, of old men and young, of bond and free, of ruler and ruled, of master and disciple. And why are you sur-

prised that it be so among mankind, when even in the body God hath done the same thing; for He hath not made all parts of equal honour, but He hath made one less, and another greater; some of the limbs hath He made to rule, and others to be ruled. And among unreasoning creatures is this same principle, amongst bees, amongst cranes, in herds of wild cattle. For anarchy, be it where it may, is an evil, and a cause of confusion.

After having said whence governments come, he proceeds:

Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God. See to what he has led the subject, and whence he has sought its sanction, and how fearful he makes it, and how he shews this to be a matter of obligation. For, lest the believer should say you are degrading us and making us of light account, when you put us, who are to enjoy the kingdom of heaven, under subjection to rulers; he shews that it is not to rulers but to God again that he is subjected, who doth this; for it is to Him that he is obedient, who subjects himself to authorities. But Paul does not say this; but uses the opposite case to awe them, and gives it a more precise form by saying, that he who obeyeth not authority is fighting with God, who framed these laws: and this in all cases he takes pains to shew, that we pay them our obedience not as a matter of favour, but of debt. In this way, too, he was more likely to draw the governors, who were unbelievers, to religion, and the believers to obedience. For there was a common report in those days, maligning the Apostles as guilty of sedition and of a revolutionary scheme, and as aiming in all they said and did at the subversion of the common institutions. When, then, you shew our common Master laying this charge upon all His servants, you will at once stop the mouths of those who malign us as revolutionists, and with full boldness of speech you will advocate the doctrines of

truth. Be not then ashamed, he says, at such subjection. For God hath laid down this law, and is a mighty avenger if this law be despised. And this he intimates, when he says,—

And they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation.

Then, to shew the gain, after shewing the fear, he makes use of reasons to persuade them, as follows:—

For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil.

Having made his wound deep and alarmed them, he now uses gentler treatment, like a wise physician, who applies soothing medicines; and he comforts them, and says, Why be afraid? why tremble? He would not punish a person that was doing well. Surely there is no fear to one who lives in the practice of virtue. Wherefore he proceeds: *Wilt thou then not be afraid of the power? do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise of the same.*

For he is the minister of God to thee for good.

So far is he from terrifying thee, that he even praises thee; so far from being a hindrance to thee, that he even works with thee. When, then, thou hast his praise and his succour, how is it that thou art not in subjection to him? For he maketh virtue easier for thee by chastising the wicked, by benefiting and honouring the good, and by working together with the will of God. Whence Paul has even given him the name of *minister*. And consider: I give you counsel to be sober-minded, and he by the laws speaks the same language: I exhort you not to be rapacious and grasping, and he sits in judgment in such cases, and so is a worker together with us, and an assistance to us, and has been commissioned by God for this end. Hence there are reasons for reverencing him, both because he was commissioned by God, and because it was for such an object.

But if thou do evil be afraid. It is not then the ruler

that makes the fear, but our own wickedness. *For he beareth not the sword in vain.* You see how he hath furnished him with arms, and set him on guard like a soldier, for a terror to those that commit sin.

For he is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil.

Now, lest you should start off at hearing again of punishment, and vengeance, and the sword, again Paul says that it is God's law which the ruler is carrying out. For what if he does not himself know this? yet it is God who hath so shaped matters. If, then, he be God's minister, whether in punishing or in giving honour, avenging the cause of virtue, driving away vice, according to the will of God, why be captious against him when he is the cause of so many good things, and paves the way also for thine own good? since there are many who first practised virtue through the rulers, and afterwards held on with it through the fear of God. For there are men of a duller sort, upon whom things future have no such hold as things present. He, then, who by fear and by rewards gives the soul of the many a preparatory inclination towards being fitted to receive the word of teaching, is with good reason called *the minister of God.*

Wherefore we must needs be subject, not only for wrath, but also for conscience sake.

Not only for wrath, means not only because thou dost resist God by not being subject, nor only because thou art bringing great evils upon thyself both from God and man, but also because the ruler is a benefactor to thee in things of the greatest importance, procuring peace and the blessings of civil government. For there spring countless blessings to states through these authorities; and if they were removed nought would stand, cities, landed property, private and public buildings,—all would go to ruin, and the world would be turned upside down, while the more powerful devoured the weaker. And so, even if wrath followed not on dis-

edience, yet on this ground oughtest thou to be subject, that thou mightest not seem devoid of confidence towards thy benefactor.

For this cause pay ye tribute also; for they are God's ministers, attending continually upon this very thing.

That thou art benefited by the ruler, he means, thou bearest witness thyself by paying him a salary. Preserve the wisdom of the blessed Paul. For that which seemed to be burdensome and annoying, the stem of imposts, he turns into a proof of their care for their people. What is the reason, he means, that we pay tribute to a king? Is it not as providing for and presiding over us, that we pay him a recompense for his concern for us? But we should not have said it, unless in the first instance we had known that we were the gainers by this superintendence. It was for this that from of old all men came to an agreement that governors should be maintained by us, because to neglect of their own affairs they take charge of the public. On this they spend their whole leisure, and by this our goods are kept in safety.

Then to shew the pains they take, and the hardness of their life, Paul proceeds:

Attending continually upon this very thing.

For this is their life, this their business, that thou mayest enjoy peace. Wherefore in another Epistle he is not only to be subject, but also to pray in their behalf, there, too, shewing that the advantage was common to all, by adding, "That we may lead a quiet and peaceable life^a."

Do not tell me of some one who makes an ill use of his power, but look to the good order that is in the institution itself, and you will see the great wisdom of him who from the first enacted this law.

Render therefore to all their dues; tribute to whom tribute, custom to whom custom, fear to whom fear, honour to whom honour.

^a 1 Tim. ii. 1, 2.

How is it that when he said above, *Wilt thou not be afraid of the power? do that which is good*, that he here says, *render fear*? He means by *fear* in this place, great honour, and not the fear which comes from a bad conscience. And he says not, "give," but *render* (or, give back as to the rightful owner), and then adds the *dues*. For it is not a favour that you confer by so doing since the thing is a matter of due, and if you do it not, you will be punished as obstinate. Think not that you are degrading yourself, and detracting from the dignity of your own philosophy, if you rise up at the presence of a ruler, or if you uncover your head. For if he laid down these laws at a time when the rulers were Gentiles, much more ought such honour to be paid to them now they are believers. But if you mean to say that you are entrusted with greater privileges, know that this is not thy time for claiming them. For thou art a stranger and a sojourner. A time will come when thou shalt appear brighter than them all. Now thy life is "hid with Christ in God^b." When Christ shall appear, then shall ye "also appear with Him in glory." Seek not then thy change in this life of accidents, but if thou hast to stand with fear in the presence of a ruler, deem it not unworthy of thy noble birth. For so God willeth, that the ruler whose place is marked by Him should possess His own power. Degradation cometh not from the giving of honour, but from the withholding of honour which is due^c.

THE GOSPEL.

ST. MATTHEW viii. 23—34.

"And when He was entered," &c.

THE multitudes Christ sent on, but the disciples He took with Himself; and this, in order to make them

^b Col. iii. 3, 4.

^c St. Chrysostom.

spectators of the miracle which was to take place. For, like a most excellent trainer, He was anointing them with a view to preparing them, as well to be undismayed in dangers, as to be modest in honours. Thus, that they might not be high-minded because, having sent away the rest, He retained them, He suffers them to be tossed with the tempest, at once correcting this temper, and disciplining them to bear trials with courage.

For great indeed were the former miracles, but this contained also no inconsiderable discipline. And it was a sign akin to the sign of old^d. For this cause He takes only the disciples with Himself. For as, when miracles were shewn, He suffers the people also to be present; so, when trials and terrors were rising up against Him, then He takes with Him none but the champions of the whole world, whom He was to discipline.

The tempest being thoroughly excited, and the sea raging, the disciples awake Him, saying, *Lord, save us, we perish*. But He rebuked them before He rebuked the sea, because, as I said, these things were permitted for the sake of discipline, and were a type of the temptations which were to overtake them. Yea, for after these things He often suffered them to fall into more grievous tempests of fortune, and bare long with them. Thus Paul saith, "We would not, brethren, have you ignorant, . . . that we were pressed out of measure, above strength, insomuch that we despaired even of life;" and again, "Who delivered us from so great a death^e." Christ first of all reproves them, signifying thereby that they ought to be confident, although the waves rise high, and that He orders all things for good. Their very alarm was profitable, making them feel more strongly the greatness of the miracle, and rendering their remembrance of the event the more lasting. For when anything strange is about

^d i.e. The miracle at the Red Sea.

^e 2 Cor. i. 8, 10.

to happen, there are prepared beforehand many things to ensure remembrance, lest, after the miracle is past, men should sink into forgetfulness.

Thus Moses is at first in fear of the serpent, and not only in fear, but even in distress, and then he sees that strange thing come to pass. So these, having at first expected to perish, were afterwards saved, that, having felt the danger, they might know the greatness of the miracle.

Therefore Christ sleeps; for had He been awake, either the disciples would not have feared, or they would not have besought Him, or they would not so much as have thought of His being able to do anything. Therefore He sleeps, to give occasion to their timidity, and to make their perception of that which was passing more distinct. A man looks not with the same eyes on that which happens to another, as on that which happens to himself; as the disciples were slightly affected when they had seen all men benefited, whilst they themselves were receiving no such benefits (for neither were they lame, nor had they any other such infirmity); it was meet that they should enjoy His benefits in their own persons; He therefore permits the storm, that thus by their own deliverance they might attain to a clearer perception of His benefits.

Christ did not this in the presence of the multitudes, that the disciples might not be openly condemned for little faith, but He takes them apart to correct them; and, before stilling the tempest of the waters, He stills the tempest of their souls, rebuking them, and saying,

Why are ye fearful, O ye of little faith; instructing them also that men's fear is wrought, not by the approach of danger, but by the weakness of faith¹.

¹ The ship was in jeopardy in the lake, and *Jesus was asleep*. We, too, are sailing through a lake, so to say, and there is no want of wind and tempest; our ship is almost filled through the daily temptations of this life. And whence comes it, but because Jesus is asleep? Why art thou disturbed by the waves of the sea, and the storm? Because He is asleep; that is, because thy faith, which is of Him, hath been

Then He arose, and rebuked the winds and the sea, and there was a great calm. But the men marvelled, saying, What manner of man is this, that even the winds and the sea obey Him? Christ chode not with them for calling Him a man, intending to teach them by His signs that their supposition was a mistake. But from what did they suppose Him to be a man? From His appearance, from His sleeping, from His making use of a ship; and so were they cast into perplexity, saying, *What manner of man is this?* For while the sleep and the outward appearance shewed Him Man, the sea and the calm declared Him God.

Then, as Moses had once performed a somewhat similar miracle, Christ now signifies His own superiority, for the one worked miracles as a servant, the other as Lord. Christ put forth no rod, as did Moses; neither did He stretch forth His Hands to heaven, nor did He need any prayer, but, as was meet for a master commanding his handmaid, or a Creator His creature, so did He quiet and curb it by word and command only, and all the turmoil was straightway at an end, and not one trace of the disturbance remained. This the Evangelist declared, saying, *And there was a great calm.* That which had been spoken of the Father as a great thing, this Christ shewed forth again by His own works; and as of the Father it is said, "He spake, and the stormy wind ceased^s," so likewise here, He spake, *And there was a great calm.* And for this most of all the multitude marvelled at Him, who would not have marvelled, had He done it in such wise as did Moses.

laid asleep in thine heart. What doest thou that thou mayest be delivered? Awake Him, and say, *Master, we perish.* For the doubtful dangers of the deep alarm us, we perish. He will awake, that is, thy faith will return to thee, the storm shall no more shake thine heart, the waves shall not fill thy bark; for thy faith commands the winds and the waves, and the danger shall pass away." St. Aug. on Ps. xxvi. 26; Exp. ii. p. 177.

^s Ps. cvii. 25, LXX.

Now when He is departed from the sea, there follows another miracle yet more awful. Men possessed with devils, like wicked runaways at sight of their master, say, *What have we to do with Thee, Jesus, Thou Son of God? Art Thou come hither to torment us before the time?*

Because the multitude called Him Man, the devils came proclaiming His Godhead, and they that heard not the sea swelling and subsiding, heard from the devils the same cry as it, by its sudden calm, was loudly uttering.

That their entreaty may not incur suspicion of flattery, their enmity is avowed beforehand. They cry out and say, *Art Thou come hither to torment us before the time?* For indeed they were invisibly receiving stripes, and the sea was not in such a storm as they; galled and inflamed, and suffering things intolerable from His mere presence. Accordingly, no man daring to bring them to Him, Christ of Himself goes unto them.

The other Evangelists^b add that they also entreated and adjured Him not to cast them into the deepⁱ. For they supposed that their punishment was now close upon them, and feared, as even now about to be overtaken by vengeance. You see, they could not deny that they had sinned, but they demand not to suffer their punishment before the time. For since He had caught them in the act of perpetrating those so incurable and lawless horrors, and deforming and punishing His creatures, and they supposed that He for the excess of their crimes would not await the day of punishment, therefore they besought and entreated Him; they that burst even bands of iron come bound to Him; they that run about the mountains are come forth into the plain; they that hindered all others from passing, at sight of Him blocking up the way, stand still.

^b St. Mark v. 10; St. Luke viii. 31.

ⁱ Or abyss. The same word as that used Rev. xx. 3.

Now, should anyone say, Wherefore did Christ fulfil the devils' request, suffering them to depart into the herd of swine, this would be our reply: That He did not as yielding to them, but as answering thereby their purposes. One, to teach those who are delivered from these wicked tyrants, how great is the malice of their insidious enemies; another, that all might learn how, not even against swine can these be bold, except by His permission; a third, that they would have treated those miserable men more grievously than the swine, unless, even in their calamity, they had enjoyed much of God's providential care. For that they hate men more than the brutes is surely evident to all. So when they that spared not the swine, but in one moment of time cast them all down the precipice, much more could they have done so to the men whom they possessed, leading them towards the desert, and carrying them away, unless, even in their very tyranny, the guardian care of God had abounded to curb and check their violence. Whence it is manifest that there is no one who doth not enjoy the benefit of God's providence. And if not all alike, nor all in one way, this is itself a very great instance of providence, that the work of providence is according to each man's necessity.

Besides this we learn another thing: that His Providence is not only over all in common, but also over each one in particular. This He declared with respect to His disciples, saying, "The very hairs of your head are all numbered^k." And we may see this in the case of these demoniacs, who would have been choked long before, if they had not enjoyed the benefit of much tender care from above.

For these reasons, then, He suffered the devils to depart into the herd of swine; and also that they who dwelt in those places should learn His power. For where His Name was great, He did not greatly

^k St. Matt. x. 30.

manifest Himself, but where no one knew Him, and all were still in an insensible condition, He made His miracles to shine forth, to bring them over to a knowledge of His Godhead. For, from the event it is evident that the inhabitants of that city were a people devoid of sense. When they ought to have adored and marvelled at His presence, they sent Him away, and besought Him that He would depart out of their coasts¹.

¹ St. Chrysostom.

THE FIFTH SUNDAY AFTER THE EPIPHANY.

THE EPISTLE.

COLOSSIANS iii. 12—17.

“Put on therefore, as the elect of God,” &c.

Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, with tender mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, long-suffering; forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a complaint^a against any: even Christ forgave you, so also do ye.

Even as Christ forgave you: great is the example! As Paul doth alway, he exhorts them after Christ. And he calls it a *complaint*, shewing it to be a petty matter; but in setting before us this example, he would persuade us that even if we had serious charges to bring against any one, we ought to forgive him. The expression, *even as Christ*, signifies this, and not as only, but that we ought to forgive with all our heart; and not this only, but that we ought also even to love.

For the example of Christ being brought in, bringeth in all these things, that even if the offence be great, even if we have not been the first to injure, even if we be of great and that other of small account, even if he be ready to insult us afterwards, even thus we ought to lay down our lives for him (the words demand this), and not even at death to stop, but if it were possible, to go on even after death.

And above all these things put on charity, which is the bond of perfectness.

Since it is possible to forgive without loving, Paul

^a E. V., margin.

saith yea thou must also love; and he points out a way whereby this becomes possible. For it is possible to be kind, and meek, and humble-minded, and long-suffering, and yet not affectionate. Now what he would say, is this: that there is no profit in these things alone, for all these things fall asunder unless they be done with love. Love it is which clenches them all together; whatsoever good thing thou canst bring forward, if charity be not there, it melts away, it is nothing. Just as in a ship, though the rigging be large, yet if there be no girding-beams it is of no service; as in a house, if there be no tie-beams it is of no service; as in a body, though the bones be large, yet if there be no ligaments they are of no service. Whatsoever good deeds any may have, all serve to no end if love be not there.

And let the peace of God rule^b in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body; and be ye thankful.

Let the peace of God rule in your hearts. If two thoughts are fighting together, set not anger to hold the prize, but peace. Suppose one insulted unjustly: of the insult are born two thoughts; the one bidding him to revenge, the other to endure; and these wrestle with one another: if the peace of God stand as umpire, it bestows the prize on that which bids endure, and puts the other to shame. How? By persuading him that God is peace, that He hath made peace with us. Not without reason Paul shews the great struggle there is in the matter. He hath represented an arena within us, a contest, and an umpire. Let not anger, he saith, act as umpire; let not contentiousness, let not human peace,—for human peace cometh of avenging, of suffering no ill; not this peace do I intend, but that which Christ Himself left,—the peace of God.

To the which ye are called. He has reminded them

^b The Greek word signifies, "be umpire."

of how many good things peace is the cause; on account of this He called thee to receive a worthy prize. Wherefore made He us *one body*? Was it not that peace might rule? Was it not that we might have occasion to be at peace? Wherefore are we all one body, and how are we one body? Because of peace we are one body, and because we are one body we are at peace. And he said not, *Let the peace of God* be victorious, but, be *umpire*, to make her the more honourable; he would not have the evil thought to wrestle with her, but to stand below.

And be ye thankful.

This is to be thankful, for one to deal with his fellow-servants as God dealeth with himself; to submit himself to the Master, to obey, to express his gratitude for all things, even though he be insulted or beaten. For in truth, he that confesses thanks to be due to God for what he suffers, will not revenge himself on him that has done him wrong, while he that takes revenge acknowledges no gratitude. Let us not imitate him who claimed the hundred pence, lest we hear, "Thou wicked servant," for nothing is worse than this ingratitude. So that they who revenge injuries are ungrateful to God.

Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.

This is the cause of all evils, the not knowing the Scriptures. We go into battle without arms, and how should we come off safe? Well contented ought we to be if we can be safe with them, let alone without them.

Singing in your hearts to God. Not simply with the lips, he means, but with the heart. This is to sing to God, but that is to sing to the air, for the voice is scattered without result. Not for display, he means;

even if thou be in the market-place, thou canst collect thyself, and sing unto God in thine heart, no one hearing thee. Moses prayed in this way, and was heard; for God saith, "Wherefore criest thou unto Me^c," albeit Moses said nothing, but cried in thought, with a contrite heart, and God alone heard him.

And whatsoever ye do, in word or deed, do all in the Name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by Him.

If we thus do, there will be nothing polluted; nothing unclean wherever Christ is called on. If thou eat, if thou drink, if thou marry, if thou travel, do all in the Name of God; that is, calling Him to aid thee. In everything first praying to Him, so enter upon thy business. Dost thou eat? Give thanks to God before and after. Dost thou sleep? Give thanks to God before and after. Enterest thou the Forum? Give thanks to God. Let nothing be worldly, nothing of this life, do all in the Name of the Lord, and all shall be prospered to thee. Whercon soever the Name of God is placed, there all things are auspicious. If it casts out devils, if it drives away diseases, much more will it render business easy.

By This Name hath the world been converted, tyranny disclosed, the devil trampled on, the heavens opened. What do I say? The heavens? We have been regenerated by This Name. This Name, if we bear, we shine forth; This Name maketh both martyrs and confessors; This Name let us hold fast as a great gift, that we may live in glory, and be well-pleasing to God, and be counted worthy of the good things promised to them that love Him, through the grace and loving-kindness of our Lord Jesus Christ^d.

^c Exod. xiv. 15.

^d St. Chrysostom.

THE GOSPEL.

ST. MATTHEW xiii. 24—30.

The Kingdom of Heaven is likened unto a man which sowed good seed in his field," &c.

WHAT is the difference between this and the parable before it [i.e. of the sower]? There Christ speaks of men that have not at all holden with Him, but have parted aside, and have thrown away the seed. But here He means the societies of the heretics. And He retells the springing up of heresy, in order that not even this might disturb His disciples. The former parable, then, sets forth men's not receiving Him; this, their receiving corrupters also. For indeed this is the devil's craft, always to bring in error by the shade of the truth; setting forth resemblances, thereby to cheat the deceivable.

Therefore He calls this not any other seed, but tares, which in appearance are somewhat like wheat^c: saying, *The Kingdom of Heaven is likened unto a man which sowed good seed in his field. But while men slept, his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat, and went away.*

He mentions also the manner of the devil's devices, *while men slept, saith He, the enemy came.* It is no small danger which He hereby suspends over our rulers, whom especially is entrusted the keeping of the field; and not over the rulers only, but also over the subjects. And He signifies also that error comes after truth, as is shewn by the general course of events. For so often the Prophets were the false Prophets; and after the Apostles the false Apostles; and after Christ,

The tares here spoken of, are supposed to be a degenerate and poisonous wheat, well known in the East, and which so nearly resembles the good wheat, as hardly to be distinguishable from it, until harvest-time, when it is known by the blackness of its grain. See *ench's Note on this Parable.*

Anti-Christ. For unless the devil see what to imitate, and against whom to plot, he makes not the attempt, for he knows not how to do it. But now the devil, having seen that one brought forth an hundred, another sixty, another thirty; and not having been able either to carry off what had taken root, or to choke it, or to scorch it up; he proceeds against it by another device, privily casting in his own inventions.

And what difference is there, some may say, between those that sleep, and those that resemble the wayside? In the latter case the enemy immediately caught up the seed, yea, he suffered it not to take root; but here he works more craftily.

And these things Christ saith, instructing us to be always wakeful. For, saith He, though thou quite escape those dangers, there is yet another. For as in those instances—the wayside, and the rock, and the thorns — so here, sleep occasions our ruin, and thus there is need of continual watchfulness.

Something like this took place even in early times. Many of the Prelates, bringing into the Churches wicked men, disguised heresiarchs, gave great facility to the laying that kind of snare. For the devil needs not to take any trouble, when he hath once planted heresiarchs among us.

And how is it possible, one may say, not to sleep? Indeed, as to natural sleep, it is not possible; but as to that of our moral faculty, it is possible. Wherefore Paul said, “Watch ye, stand fast in the faith.”

After this Christ points out this sowing of tares to be not only hurtful, but superfluous also, in that after the land hath been tilled, and there is no need of doing more, then this enemy sows again, like the heretics who inject their poison for no other cause than vainglory.

He further describes what they do. *When the blade was sprung up*, saith He, *and brought forth fruit, then*

reared the tares also. So, at the beginning, do these disguise themselves, but when they have gained confidence, and the teaching of the word is entrusted to them, then they pour out their poison.

But wherefore doth He bring in the servants, telling what hath been done? That He may pronounce it worthy to slay them.

And He calls him who sowed the tares an enemy, because of the harm done to men. For although the spite is against us, in its origin it sprang from his enmity, not to us, but to God.

And mark also the affection of the servants; I mean what haste they are, at once to root up the tares, although they do it indiscreetly, shewing their anxiety for the crop. They are looking to the one thing only, not to the punishment of the enemy, but to the preservation of the seed sown. For of course another is not the urgent consideration.

Wherefore their object is, how they may at once exterminate the mischief. And not even this do they seek absolutely, for they trust not themselves with it, but wait for the Master's decision, saying, *Wilt thou?*

What, then, doth the Master? He forbids them, saying, *Lest . . . ye root up also the wheat with them.*

And thus He said, to hinder wars, and blood and slaughter. For it is not right to put a heretic to death, since an inextinguishable war would thus be brought into the world. By these two reasons, then, He restrains them. One, lest the wheat should be hurt; the other, that punishment will surely overtake such as are incurably diseased. If thou wouldst have them punished, yet without harm to the wheat, I bid thee wait for the proper season.

But what means, *Lest ye root up also the wheat with them?* Either He means, If ye are to take up arms and kill the heretics, many of the saints must be overthrown with them; or, He means that of the very tares it is likely that many may change and become wheat.

If, therefore, ye root them up beforehand, ye injure that which might become wheat, slaying some in whom there is yet room for change and improvement. He doth not forbid our checking heretics, and stopping their mouths, and taking away their freedom of speech, and breaking up their assemblies and confederacies, but our slaying them.

And mark thou His gentleness; how He not only pronounces the sentence and a prohibition, but gives reasons for His decision.

And what if the tares should remain unto the end? *I will say to the reapers, Gather ye together first the tares, and bind them in bundles to burn them.* So long as they stand by the wheat we must spare them, for it is even possible that they may become wheat. But when they have departed this life, having profited nothing, then, of necessity, the inexorable punishment will overtake them. For *I will say to the reapers, Gather ye together first the tares, and bind them in bundles to burn them: but gather the wheat into My barn* *.

* St. Chrysostom.

THE SIXTH SUNDAY AFTER THE EPIPHANY.

THE EPISTLE.

1 ST. JOHN iii. 1—8.

“Behold what manner of love,” &c.

Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed on us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew Him not.

There is a whole world Christian, and a whole world godly, because throughout the whole world there are godly, and throughout the whole world there are ungodly. Those know not these. When ye, therefore, hear the word “world” in a bad signification, ye must understand it to mean only lovers of the ungodly world. The ungodly world hath not known us, because it hath not known Him. He sojourned here Himself, the Lord Jesus Christ, in the flesh; He was God; He was hidden in weakness. And wherefore was He not known? Because He reproved all sins in men. They, through loving the delights of sin, did not acknowledge the Physician, through loving the disease they did wrong to the Physician.

What then are we? Already we are begotten of God; *Beloved, now are we sons of God.* Now already? Then what look we for, if already we are sons of God? *And it doth not yet, saith he, appear what we shall be. For what else shall we be than sons of God?* Hear what follows: *We know that when He shall appear, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is.* Understand, my beloved, it is a great matter. *We know that when He shall appear we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is.* In the first place, mark what That

is that is so called Is. Ye know What it is that is so called. That which is called Is, and not only is called, but is so, is Unchangeable; It ever remaineth, It cannot be changed; It is in no part corruptible; It hath neither proficiency, for It is perfect; nor hath It deficiency, for It is eternal. And what is this? "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God^a." And what is This, "Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God^b." To see Christ in this sort, Christ in the form of God, the Word of God, the Only-Begotten of the Father, Equal with the Father,—so to see Christ is to the bad impossible. But in regard that the *Word was made Flesh*, the wicked shall have power to see Him. In the Day of Judgment the wicked will see Him, for He shall so come to judge as He came to be judged. In the self-same Form, a Man, but yet God. As a man He came to be judged, as a man He will come to judge. If He shall not be seen, what is this that is written,—“They shall look on Him whom they pierced^c?” And of the ungodly it is said, that they shall see and be confounded. How shall the ungodly not see, when He shall set some on the right hand, others on the left; saying to those on the right hand, “Come, ye blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom^d;” to those on the left, “Depart from Me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire.” They will see but the form of a servant, the form of God they will not see. Why? because they are ungodly, and the Lord Himself saith, “Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God^e.” Therefore we are to see a vision, my brethren, which neither eye hath seen nor ear hath heard, nor hath entered into the heart of man. A certain vision, a vision surpassing all earthly beautifulness of gold, of silver, of groves and fields; the beautifulness of sea and air, the beautifulness of sun and moon, the

^a St. John i. 1.^b Philip. ii. 6.^c St. John xix. 37.^d St. Matt. xxv. 34.^e St. Matt. v. 8.

beautiffulness of the stars, the beautiffulness of angels, surpassing all things, because from It are all things beautiful.

What, then, shall we be, when we see this? What is promised to us? *We shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is.* The tongue hath done what it could, it hath sounded the words; let the rest be thought by the heart. For what hath even John himself said in comparison of that which Is, or what can be said by us, who are so far inferior to John? Return we, therefore, to that unction of Him, return we to that unction, which inwardly teacheth that which we cannot speak, and because ye cannot at present see, let your part and duty be to desire. The whole life of a good Christian is a holy desire. Now what thou longest for thou dost not yet see, howbeit by longing thou art made capable, so that when That is come which thou mayst see, thou shalt be filled. For as when thou wouldst fill a sack or skin, by stretching thou makest it capable of holding more; so God, by deferring our hope, stretches our desire; by the desiring stretches the mind, by stretching the mind makes it more capacious. Let us desire, therefore, my brethren, in order that we may be filled. See Paul widening, as it were, his bosom, that it may be able to receive that which is to come. He saith, "Not that I have already received, or am already perfect; brethren, I deem not myself to have apprehended¹." Then what art thou doing in this life, if thou hast not apprehended? "This one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth to those things which are before, I press towards the mark for the prize of the high calling." He felt Himself too little to take in that which eye hath not seen nor ear heard, neither hath entered into the heart of man. This is our life, that by longing we should be exercised. But holy longing exercises just in so far as we prune off our longings from the love of the world.

¹ Phil. iii. 12; E. V., attained.

Empty out that which is to be filled. Thou art to be filled with good, pour out the bad. That which the vessel bore in it must be emptied out, the vessel must be cleansed, though it be with labour, yea though it be with hard labour,—that it may become fit for that thing, whatsoever it be, with which God will fill it. Let us say honey, let us say gold, let us say wine, whatever we say it is, being that which cannot be said, whatever we would fain say, it is called—God. And when we say, “God,” what have we said? Is that one syllable the whole of that we look for? Whatever we have had power to say is beneath Him. Let us stretch ourselves unto Him, that when He shall come He may fill us. *For we shall be like Him, because we shall see Him as He is.*

And every man that hath this hope in him, purifieth himself even as He is pure. Sec, he has not taken away free-will, for he saith, *purifieth himself.* Who purifieth thee, but God? Yea, but God doth not purify thee if thou be unwilling. For in that thou joinest thy will to God, in that thou purifiest thyself. Purifiest thyself, not by thyself, but by Him who cometh to inhabit thee. Still, because thou doest somewhat therein by the will, therefore is somewhat attributed to thee. But it is attributed to thee only to the end that thou shouldst say as in the Psalm, “Be Thou my helper.” If thou sayest, “Be Thou my helper,” thou doest somewhat; for if thou be doing nothing, how should He be said to *help* thee?

Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the Law, for sin is the transgression of the Law. And ye know that He was manifested to take away our sins; and in Him is no sin. He, in whom sin is not, the Same is come to take away sin.

Whosoever abideth in Him, sinneth not. In so far as he abideth in Him, in so far he sinneth not. *Whosoever sinneth hath not seen Him, neither known Him.*

great question this. *Whosoever sinneth hath not seen Him, neither known Him.* No marvel. We have not seen Him, but are to see; have not known Him, but are to know. We believe on One we have not known. Perhaps by faith we have known, but by actual beholding we have not yet known. But then in faith we have both seen and known. For if faith doth not yet see, why are we said to have been enlightened? There is an enlightening by faith, and an enlightening by sight. At present, while we are on pilgrimage, we walk by faith, not by sight. Therefore our righteousness is by faith, not by sight. Our righteousness shall be perfect when we shall actually behold. Only, in the meanwhile, let us not leave that righteousness which is of faith, since the just doth live by faith, as with the Apostle.

Little children, let no man deceive you. He that doeth righteousness is righteous, even as He is righteous. What! hearing that we are righteous as He is righteous, are we to think ourselves equal with God? Ye must understand what means that *as*: a while ago he said, *Purifieth himself even as He is pure.* Then is our purity like, and equal to, the purity of God? And our righteousness,

God's righteousness? Who can say this? The word *as*, is not always used in the sense of equality. For example: if, having seen this large church, a person should build one smaller, but with the same relative dimensions,—as, for example, if this be one measure in width, and two measures in length, he, too, could build his church one measure in width, two measures in length,—in that case one sees he has built *as* this is built. But this church is, say, a hundred cubits in length, the other thirty; it is at once *as* this, and yet unequal. Ye see that this *as* does not always refer to parity and equality. See, for example, what difference there is between the face of a man, and his image in a mirror: there is a face in the image, and a face in the body; the image exists in semblance,

the body in reality. And yet we say, *as* there are eyes here, so also there; *as* ears here, so also there. The thing is different, but the *as* is said of the resemblance. Well, then, we have in us the image of God; but not that which the Son, equal with the Father, hath: yet except we also, according to our measure, are *as* He, we can in no respect be said to be like Him. *He purifieth us, then, even as He is pure:* but He is pure from eternity, we are made pure by faith. We are *righteous, even as He is righteous;* but He is righteous in His very immutable perpetuity, we righteous by believing on One we do not see, that so we may one day see Him. Even when our righteousness shall be perfect, when we shall be equal with the angels, not even then shall it be equal with His. How far, then, is it from Him now, when not even then it shall be equal!

He that committeth sin is of the devil, for the devil sinneth from the beginning.

Is of the devil. He means, by imitating the devil. For the devil made no man, begat no man, created no man; but whoso imitates the devil, that person, as if begotten by him, becomes a child of the devil. In what sense art thou a child of Abraham? Not that Abraham begat thee. Thou art become so in the same sense as the Jews, the children of Abraham, not imitating the faith of Abraham, are become children of the devil. They were begotten of the flesh of Abraham, and the faith of Abraham they have not imitated. As then, those who were begotten were put out of the inheritance because they did not imitate, so thou who art not begotten of him art, by imitating him, brought unto the inheritance,—art made a child of Abraham.

For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil.

Now then, brethren, mark! Adam was made by God; but when he consented to the devil, he was begotten of the devil, and such as he was himself begat he all men. If we are born without any sin,

wherefore this running with infants to Baptism, that they may be released?

Then mark well, brethren, the two birth-stocks,—Adam and Christ: two men they are, but one a man that is man, the other a Man that is God. By the man that is man we are sinners, by the Man that is God we are justified. That birth has cast down unto death, this birth hath raised up unto life; that birth brings with it sin, this birth sets free from sin. *For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil*^a.

THE GOSPEL.

ST. MATTHEW xxiv. 23—31.

“Then if any man shall say,” &c.

Then if any man shall say unto you, Lo, here is Christ, or there;—

Having finished what concerned Jerusalem, Christ passes on to His own coming, and tells the signs of it, not for the sake of those only who heard Him, but for our sake also, and for that of all those that shall come after us.

Not as at His first coming, when He appeared in Bethlehem, in a small corner of the world, and no one knew Him,—not so, saith He, shall it then be, but openly and with all circumstance He will come, and not needing any to proclaim these things.

And here He saith nothing of the wars which should precede His Advent, but He speaks of the deceivers; “They shall come,” saith He, “and shall deceive many.” Some, even in the days of the Apostles, deceived the multitude; and others shall do the same before His

^a St. Augustine in loc.

second coming, and these shall also be more dangerous than the former. For they *shall shew*, He saith, *great signs and wonders ; insomuch that (if it were possible) they shall deceive the very elect.* Here He is speaking of anti-christ, and indicates that some shall minister to him.

And see how He guards them, *Go not forth* into the deserts, enter not into the secret chambers. He did not say, "Go, and do not believe;" but *go not*, for great will be the deceiving when even lying miracles are wrought.

Having told them how antichrist cometh, as, for instance, that it will be in a place, He saith how Himself cometh. How then doth He Himself come? *As the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west ; so shall also the coming of the Son of Man be. For wheresoever the carcase is, there will the eagles be gathered together.* How, then, shineth the lightning? It needeth not one to tell of it, it needeth not a herald, but even to them that sit in houses, and to them in chambers, it shews itself in an instant of time throughout the whole world. So shall that coming be, shewing itself at once everywhere by the shining forth of His glory. But He mentions also another sign,—*Where the carcase is, there will the eagles be*, meaning the multitude of the angels, of the martyrs, of all the saints.

Then He tells of fearful prodigies. *Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened.* Of the tribulation of what days doth He speak? Of the days of antichrist and of false prophets ; for there shall be great tribulation, there being so many deceivers. But it is not protracted to a length of time ; if the Jewish war was shortened for the elect's sake, much more shall this trial also be limited for their sake. Therefore He said not *after the tribulation*, but *immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened.* For almost at the same time all things come to pass. No small turmoil will then prevail over the world ; the false prophets and false Christs

shall come and cause confusion, and immediately He Himself will appear.

And how doth He come? The very creation will be then transfigured, for the sun shall be darkened; not destroyed, but overcome by the light of His presence. The stars shall fall, for henceforth what need of them when there is no night? *And the powers of the heavens shall be shaken*, seeing so great a change come to pass. For if when the stars were made they trembled and marvelled, much more, seeing all things in course of change, and their fellow-servants giving account, the whole world standing before that awful judgment-seat, and those who have lived from Adam until His coming having an account demanded of them of all that they have done,—seeing this, how shall they but tremble and be shaken?

Then shall appear the sign of the Son of Man in heaven. That is, the Cross being brighter than the sun, this will be darkened and hide itself, and that will appear brighter than the beams of the sun. But wherefore both this sign appear? In order that the shamelessness of the Jews may be silenced. For having the Cross as the strongest plea, Christ thus cometh to that judgment-seat, shewing not His wounds only, but also the path of reproach. Then shall the tribes mourn, for there shall be no need of an accusation when they see the Cross. They shall mourn because by His death they are nothing benefited, for they crucified Him whom they ought to have adored. They shall mourn when they look on Him whom they pierced.

Seest thou how fearfully He has pictured His coming? How He has stirred up the spirits of His disciples? For this reason, let me add, He puts the mournful things first, and then the good things, that he may comfort and refresh them. And He suggests the remembrance of His Passion and of His resurrection, and with a display of glory He mentions His Cross,

so that they may not be ashamed nor grieve; for indeed He then cometh, then setting it forth for His sign.

And forasmuch as He had made mention of the Cross, He added, *They shall see the Son of Man coming*, no longer on the Cross, but *in the clouds of heaven, with power and great glory.*

Think not, He meaneth, because thou hearest of the Cross, that it is now anything mournful, for He shall come *with power and great glory.* But He bringeth the Cross, that their sin may be self-condemned, as if one that was struck by a stone should shew the stone itself, or his garments stained with blood. And He cometh in a cloud as He was taken up; and the tribes, seeing these things, mourn. Not, however, that the terrors shall with them proceed no further than mourning, but the mourning will be that they may bring forth their sentence from within, and condemn themselves.

And He shall send His angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together His elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other. When thou hast heard of this, consider the punishment of them that are left. He had spoken unto them of grievous wars, that they might learn that together with fearful things here, torments there also await them. He brings them in mourning, and separated from the elect, and consigned to hell; by this again rousing the disciples, and shewing from how many evils they shall be delivered, and how many good things they shall enjoy.

And why doth He now call them by angels, if He comes Himself thus openly? To honour them in this way also. Paul saith that they shall be caught up in clouds; and he said this when he was speaking concerning the resurrection. "For the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice

archangelⁱ;" so that when risen again, the
s shall gather them together; when gathered
her, the clouds shall catch them up. And all
things are done in a moment, in an instant.
not that He, abiding above, calleth them; but
himself cometh with the sound of a trumpet^k.

ⁱ 1 Thess. iv. 16.

^k St. Chrysostom.

SEPTUAGESIMA SUNDAY.

THE EPISTLE.

1 CORINTHIANS ix. 24—27.

• “Know ye not that they which run,” &c.

Know ye not that they which run in a race run all, but one receiveth the prize?

Now this Paul saith, not as though here [i.e. in the Christian race] only one out of many would be saved, far from it; but to set forth the exceeding diligence which it is our duty to use. For as there, though many descend into the course, not many are crowned, but only one; and it is not enough to have been anointed, and to have entered into the contest; so here, it is not sufficient to have believed and to have contended, but, unless we have so run as to keep ourselves unblameable unto the end, and to come near the prize, it will profit us nothing.

For even though thou consider thyself to be perfect according to knowledge, thou shalt not yet attain the whole, which Paul hints at, in saying, *So run that ye may obtain.* Whence it seems that they to whom he spake had not yet attained. Having said thus, he teaches them the manner of attaining:

And every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things.

What meaneth *in all things*? He doth not abstain from one thing and indulge himself in another, but he masters all his passions. This, saith Paul, takes place even in the heathen games, for neither is one excess nor another permitted at the time of the contest to those who contend; nor even so much as that they

should be busied about other matters, but, separating themselves altogether from other things, they apply themselves to their exercise only. Now if these things be so there, where the crown falls to one, much more here, where one alone is not to be crowned, where the incitements to emulation are more abundant, and where the rewards far surpass the labours. Wherefore Paul puts it so as to shame them, saying, *Now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown, but we an incorruptible.*

I therefore so run, not as uncertainly. Having shamed them by the example of those that are without, he next brings himself forward, which is a most excellent mode of teaching. And what means *not as uncertainly*? Not at random and in vain, but looking to the mark. *So fight I, not as one that beateth the air.* For there is one at whom I may strike,—the devil. *But I keep under my body and bring it into subjection; lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway.* “Do not, I pray you, suppose that by taking things easily I arrive at this desirable result. It is a race, and a manifold struggle, and a tyrannical nature is continually rising up against me, and seeking to free itself from subjection. But I indulge it not, but keep it down, and, with many struggles, bring it into subjection.” Now this he saith, that none may in despair withdraw from the conflict, because the undertaking is laborious. Wherefore he saith, *I keep under, and bring into subjection.* He said not, “I kill,” for the flesh is not to be hated; but, *I keep under, and bring into subjection*, as a master, not an enemy; a teacher, not a foe; a school-master, not an adversary.

Lest by any means, having preached to others, I myself should be a cast-away.

Now if Paul feared this, who had taught so many, and feared it after his preaching and becoming a messenger of God, and undertaking the patronage of the whole world, what can we say^a?

^a St. Chrysostom.

By his own fear, the blessed Apostle hath alarmed us. For what shall the lamb do, when the ram trembleth ^b?

A crown of victory is not promised, save to them who strive. But in the divine Scriptures we constantly find a crown promised us if we conquer in the strife.

We ought, then, to understand who is that adversary whom, if we shall have overcome, we shall be crowned. It is he whom our Lord hath overcome before us, that we also, abiding in Him, may overcome. We are striving against the devil and his angels, who rejoice in our discomfiture.

The question is, in what manner we may be enabled to fight against, and overcome, those whom we see not; so that fools may not think that we have to fight against the air.

The Apostle himself teaches us, saying, "Not so fight I as beating the air; but I chasten my body, and bring it into subjection, lest haply, preaching unto others, I myself be found a reprobate." Also he says, "Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ ^c." Whereby we are to understand that the Apostle himself, in himself, triumphed over the powers of this world, as he had asserted of the Lord, of Whom he professes himself to be a follower. Let us, then, follow him as he exhorts us, and let us chasten our body and bring it into subjection, if we would overcome the world. For as this world may have rule over us by means of its unlawful delights, and pomp, and deadly curiosity, which bind captive the lovers of things temporal, and compel them to serve the devil and his angels; let us, if we have renounced these, reduce our body to subjection.

And this may be easily understood and done, if we first subject ourselves to God, with a good will and sincere love. Every created being, whether he will it or not, is subject to his one God and Lord; but we are admonished to serve the Lord our God with our

^b St. Aug., Serm. cxxviii. 1.

^c 1 Cor. xi. 1.

whole will. The wicked man serves, but in fetters; the righteous serves as a freeman. All do serve the divine providence, but the one as sons, working with it that which is good, the other as slaves, suffering of it that which is just.

And let it not move us, that, in this life, in the flesh which they bear, those who with their whole will serve God, yet suffer many things grievous and harsh. For no real ill do they suffer, who can say that which that spiritual man the Apostle, exulting, proclaims, "We glory in tribulations; knowing that tribulation worketh patience; and patience, experience; and experience, hope: and hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us^d." If, therefore, in this life wherein are so great torments, good and just men are enabled, when suffering such things, not only to endure them with equanimity, but also while enduring them to glory in the love of God, —what ought we to think of that life which is promised to us, wherein we shall endure no evil^e?

THE GOSPEL.

ST. MATTHEW XX. 1—16.

"The Kingdom of Heaven is like unto a man which is an householder," &c.

The kingdom of heaven is like unto a man that is an householder, which went out early in the morning to hire labourers into his vineyard. And when he had agreed with the labourers for a penny a day, he sent them into his vineyard.

And he went out about the third hour, and saw others standing idle in the market-place, and said unto them, Go

^d Rom. v. 3—5.
De Agone Christiano, V.

^e St. Augustine, Short Treatises,

ye also into the vineyard, and whatsoever is right I will give you. And they went their way.

Again he went out about the sixth and ninth hour, and did likewise. And about the eleventh hour he went out, and found others standing idle, and saith unto them, Why stand ye here all the day idle? They say unto Him, Because no man hath hired us. He saith unto them, Go ye also into the vineyard, and whatsoever is right, that shall ye receive.

The Master of the household, our Maker, has a vineyard, the Church universal, which has borne so many stocks, as it has put forth saints from righteous Abel to the very last saint who shall be born in the end of the world. To instruct His people as in the dressing of a vineyard, the Lord has never ceased to send forth His labourers; first the patriarchs, next the teachers of the Law, then the Prophets, and at the last the Apostles. He has toiled in the cultivation of His vineyard, though every man, in whatsoever measure or degree he has joined good action with right faith, may be said to have been a labourer in the vineyard.

The morning is that age of the world which was from Adam to Noah. The third hour is the period from Noah to Abraham. The sixth hour is that from Abraham to Moses; the ninth, that from Moses to the coming of the Lord. The eleventh hour is that from the coming of the Lord to the end of the world. The labourer in the morning, at the third, sixth and ninth hours, denotes the ancient Hebrew people, which in its elect, from the very beginning of the world, while it zealously and with true faith served the Lord, ceased not to labour in the husbandry of the vineyard. But at the eleventh, the Gentiles are called. For they, who through so many ages of the world had neglected to labour for their living, were they who had stood the whole day idle. But remember their answer. They say unto Him, *Because no man hath hired us*; for neither Patriarch nor Prophet had come to them. And

What is it to say, *no man hath hired us*, but to say, none as preached to us the way of life?

Or otherwise, the morning is our childhood, the third hour may be understood as our youth, the sun, as it were, mounting to its height is the advance of the heat of age; the sixth hour is manhood, when the sun is steady in its meridian height, representing, as it were, the maturity of strength; by the ninth understood old age, in which the sun descends from its vertical height, as our age falls away from the fervour of youth; the eleventh hour is that age which is decrepid and dotting¹.

So when even was come, the lord of the vineyard saith unto his steward, Call the labourers, and give them their hire, beginning from the last unto the first. And when they came that were hired about the eleventh hour, they received every man a penny. But when the first came, they supposed that they should have received more; and they likewise received every man a penny.

And when they had received it, they murmured against the good-man of the house, saying, These last have wrought but one hour, and thou hast made them equal unto us, which have borne the burden and heat of the day. But he answered one of them, and said, Friend, I do thee no wrong; didst not thou agree with me for a penny? Take that thine is, and go thy way; I will give unto this last even as unto thee. Is it not lawful for me to do what I will with mine own? Is thine eye evil, because I am good?

The penny is life eternal; and as to the life eternal all will be equal². For although through diversity of attainments the saints will shine, some more, some less, yet in respect to the gift of eternal life, this will be equal to all. For that will not be longer to one and shorter to another, which is to all everlasting. After one sort in that life will be wedded chastity, after

¹ St. Gregory, Catena.
the Gospel for Sexagesima.

² See note from St. Cyprian, in

another, virgin purity; in one sort there will be the fruit of good works, in another sort the cross of martyrdom. One in one sort and another in another, yet in respect to the living for ever, all are alike: this man will not live more than that, nor that than this; for alike without end will they all live, though each will live in his own brightness.

Brethren, hearken ye and understand, lest any put off to come into the vineyard because he is sure that, come when he will, he shall receive this penny. Thou art called at the sixth hour,—come. The Householder hath, it is true, promised thee a penny if thou come at the eleventh hour; but whether thou shalt live even till the seventh, no one hath promised thee. Why dost thou, then, put off Him that calleth thee, certain as thou art of the reward, but uncertain of the time? Take heed, then, lest peradventure what He is to give thee by promise, thou take from thyself by delay.

But perhaps the Householder hath not gone out to call thee? If He hath not gone out, what mean our addresses to you? We are servants of His household, we are sent to hire labourers. Why, then, standest thou still?

This is the *going out* of the householder, the making himself known. He that is in the house is hidden; he is not seen by those who are without, but when he *goeth out* he is seen. So Christ is in secret so long as He is not known and acknowledged, but when He is acknowledged, then He hath gone out to hire labourers. Now He hath come forth from a hidden place to be known of men, every where Christ is known, Christ is preached. The glory of Christ is proclaimed aloud in all places under the heaven. What tongue has not the Christian religion reached; to what limits does it not extend? Now there is no one who can hide himself from the heat thereof, and yet delay is still ventured by him who stands idle at the eleventh hour.

Brethren, the truth is plain; do ye hold it fast and be sure of it; whensoever one turns himself to the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, from a useless or abandoned way of life, all that is past is forgiven him; and, as though all his debts were cancelled, a new account entered into with him. All is entirely forgiven. Let no one be anxious in the thought that there remains anything which is not forgiven. But, on the other hand, let no one rest in a perverse security, for these two things are the death of souls,—despair, and a perverse hope. For as a good and right hope saveth, so doth a perverse hope deceive and destroy.

First, consider how despair deceiveth. There are men, who, when they begin to reflect on the evils they have done, think they cannot be forgiven; and forthwith give up their souls to ruin, and perish through despair; saying in their thoughts, There is no hope for us, for such gross sins as we have committed cannot be pardoned; why, then, should we not satisfy our lusts? Let us at least fill up the pleasure of the time present, seeing we have no reward in that which is to come. Let us do what we list though it be not lawful, that we may at least have a temporal enjoyment, because we cannot attain to an eternal one. In saying such things, they perish through despair, either before they believe at all, or when, being Christians already, they have fallen by evil living into habitual sin. The Lord of the vineyard goes forth unto them, and by the prophet Ezekiel calleth to them, as they turn their backs to Him in their despair. "In whatsoever day a man shall turn from his most wicked way, I will forget all his iniquities^a." If they hear and believe his voice, they are rescued from despair, and rise up again from that deep, bottomless gulf, wherein they had been sunk.

But these men must fear lest they fall into another snare, and they who died not through despair, should

^a Ezek. xviii. 21, not E. V.

perish through a perverse hope. For they now change their thoughts, which are far different from what they were before, yet not less pernicious. They begin to say in their hearts, If in whatever day I turn from my most evil way, the merciful God, as He truly promised by the Prophet, will forget all mine iniquities, why should I turn to-day and not to-morrow? Let this day pass as yesterday, to-morrow I will turn myself, and there will be an end to mine iniquities. Well, rejoice indeed that to-morrow there will be an end of thine iniquities, but what if before to-morrow shall be thine own end? Thou doest well to rejoice that God hath promised thee forgiveness for thine iniquities if thou art converted, but mark that no one hath promised thee to-morrow. For the sake of these also does the Householder go forth. As He went forth to those who had despaired without reason, and were lost in their despair, and called them back to hope, so doth He go forth to these also who would perish through a false hope; and chiding them, saith, "Make no tarrying to turn to the Lord, and put not off from day to day; for suddenly shall the wrath of the Lord come forth, and in thy security thou shalt be destroyed, and perish in the day of vengeance¹." Therefore delay not, shut not against thyself what now is open. Lo! the Giver of forgiveness openeth the door to thee, why dost thou delay? Thou oughtest to rejoice, were He to open after ever so long a time, to thy knocking; thou hast not knocked, yet He doth open, and dost thou remain outside²?

So the last shall be first and the first last; for many be called, but few chosen.

He seems to me to say these things, darkly hinting at the Jews, and also at those amongst the believers who shine brightly at first, but afterwards neglect virtue, and fall back; and at those again, who, having risen from sin, have attained to greater excellence than

¹ Eccus. v. 7.

² St. Aug., N. T., Hom. 87.

many others. For we see such changes taking place with respect both to faith and practice.

Wherefore I entreat you, let us use much diligence both to stand firm in the true faith, and to lead a virtuous life. For unless we add a consistent life to our faith, we shall suffer the extremest punishment.

And this the blessed Paul shewed even from the times of old, when he said that they “did all eat the same spiritual meat, and did all drink the same spiritual drink;” and added that they were not saved, “For they were overthrown in the wilderness¹.” And Christ declared the same, when He brought in some that had cast out devils,—had prophesied, and yet were led away to punishment. And all His parables, as that of the Virgins, that of the Net, that of the Thorns, that of the Tree not bringing forth fruit,—all shew the need of a virtuous life and good works. Concerning doctrines, Christ seldom discourses, for the subject needeth not labour, but of life He often, or rather, on all occasions, speaks, because in this the struggle is continual, the labour unceasing^m.

¹ 1 Cor. x. 3—5.

^m St. Chrysostom.

SEXAGESIMA SUNDAY.

THE EPISTLE.

2 CORINTHIANS xi. 19—31.

“Ye suffer fools gladly,” &c.

Ye suffer fools gladly, seeing ye yourselves are wise. For ye suffer if a man bring you into bondage, if a man derour you, if a man take of you, if a man exalt himself, if a man smite you on the face. I speak as concerning reproach, as though we had been weak : howbeit, whereinsoever any is bold, (I speak foolishly,) I am bold also. Are they Hebrews ? so am I. Are they Israelites ? so am I. Are they the seed of Abraham ? so am I. Are they ministers of Christ ? (I speak as a fool,) I am more : in labours more abundant ; in stripes above measure ; in prisons more frequent ; in deaths oft. Of the Jews five times received I forty stripes save one ; thrice was I beaten with rods ; once was I stoned ; thrice I suffered shipwreck ; a night and a day I have been in the deep ; in journeyings often ; in perils of waters ; in perils of robbers ; in perils by mine own countrymen ; in perils by the heathen ; in perils in the city ; in perils in the wilderness ; in perils in the sea ; in perils among false brethren ; in weariness and painfulness ; in watchings often ; in hunger and thirst ; in fastings often ; in cold and nakedness ; besides those things that are without, that which cometh upon me daily, the care of all the churches. Who is weak, and I am not weak ? who is offended, and I burn not ? If I must needs glory, I will glory of the things which concern mine infirmities. The God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which is blessed for evermore, knoweth that I lie not.

This is the brilliant victory, this is the Church's trophy, by this is the devil overthrown,—when we suffer injury. For when we suffer, he is taken captive; and himself suffers harm when he would fain inflict it upon us. This happened in the case of Paul, and the more the devil plied him with perils, the more was he defeated. He raised against him not one kind of trial, but many trials, and of various kinds. For some involved labour, others sorrow, others fear, others pain, others care, others shame, others all these at once, and yet was Paul victorious in all. And as if a single soldier having the whole world against him, should move through the ranks of his enemies, and suffer no harm, even so did Paul, singly, among barbarians, among Greeks, on every land, on every sea, appear, and remain unconquered. Like a spark falling upon reeds and hay, like a winter torrent sweeping over all things, so did this man, advancing upon all, overturn all obstacles, make all things change their very nature. Like some champion who wrestles, who runs, who fights, or like some soldier engaged against an enemy, by turns attacking on foot, on shipboard, so did Paul, by turns, try every form of warfare. He breathed fire, and was unapproachable; with his single arm taking possession of the world, with his single tongue putting all to silence. Not with such force did the breath of those many trumpets fall upon the walls of Jericho and throw them down, as did the sound of this man's voice dash to the earth the devil's strongholds, and bring over to himself those that were against him. And when he had collected a multitude of captives, he armed them on his own side, and conquered by their means. Wonderful was David, who laid low Goliath with a single stone, but in comparison with Paul's achievements, David's was as a child's exploit; and as great as is the difference between a shepherd and a general, so great is the difference between David

and Paul. For this man brought down no Goliath by the hurling of a stone, but by his voice alone scattered the whole array of the devil. As a lion roaring and darting out flame from his mouth, so was he found irresistible by all; he was everywhere by turns, swifter than the wind, governing the whole world as it had been a single ship; he was rescuing the sinking, steadying the dizzied, cheering on the sailors, sitting at the tiller, watching the prow, tightening the yards, handling the oars, watching the sky, being all things in himself; sailor and pilot, and sail and ship, and suffering all things to relieve the ills of others. Consider: He endured shipwreck, that he might stay the shipwreck of the world. A day and a night he passed in the deep, that he might draw men up from the depths of error. He was in weariness, that he might refresh the weary. He endured blows, that he might heal those that had been smitten of the devil. He was in prison, that he might deliver those that were sitting in chains; in darkness, that he might lead them forth to the light. He was in deaths oft, that he might deliver others from more grievous death. Five times he received forty stripes save one, that he might free those that inflicted them from the scourge of the devil. He was beaten with rods, that he might bring them under the rod and staff of Christ. He was stoned, that he might deliver them from the senseless stones*. He was in the wilderness, that he might take them out of the wilderness of sin: in journeyings, to stay their wanderings, and open the way that leadeth to heaven. He was in peril in the cities, that he might shew the city that is above. In hunger and thirst, to deliver from a more grievous famine. In nakedness, to clothe their unseemliness with a robe of Christ. Set upon by the multitude, that he might extricate them from

* Gods of stone.

the besetments of fiends. He burned, that he might quench the fiery darts of the devil: was let down through a window by the wall, to send up from below those that lay prostrate on the ground.

Shall we speak more of suffering, seeing we do not so much as know all that Paul suffered? Shall we make mention any more of loss of goods or even of wife, or city, or freedom, when we have seen him ten thousand times despising life itself? The martyr dies once for all; but that beloved saint, in his one body and one soul, endured continually. What things all the saints together have suffered in so many bodies, Paul endured in one. He entered the world as if a race-course, he stripped himself of all, and nobly made his stand. For he knew the fiends that were wrestling with him.

And though suffering and doing such great things, he ever maintained an exceeding modesty. For when he was driven upon the necessity of relating his own great deeds, he ran quickly through them. Knowing, then, these things, let us also learn to be modest; not boasting at any time of worldly advantages, but rather in the reproaches we suffer for Christ's sake: and let us speak of these only when need compels. If there be no need, let us not mention even these, but our sins only. So shall we be released from them, and shall have God propitious to us, and shall attain the life to come; whereunto may we all attain through the grace and love towards men of our Lord Jesus Christ, with whom to the Father, with the Holy Ghost, be glory, might, and honour, now and for ever. Amen ^b.

^b St. Chrysostom, Hom. *in loc.*

THE GOSPEL.

ST. LUKE viii. 4—15.

“When much people were gathered,” &c.

When much people were gathered together, and were come to Him out of every city, He spake by a parable: A sower went out to sow his seed; and as he sowed, some fell by the way-side, and it was trodden down, and the fowls of the air devoured it. And some fell upon a rock, and as soon as it was sprung up, it withered away, because it lacked moisture. And some fell among thorns, and the thorns sprang up with it, and choked it. And other fell on good ground, and sprang up, and bare fruit an hundred-fold. And when He had said these things, He cried, He that hath ears to hear, let him hear. And His disciples asked Him, saying, What might this parable be? And He said, Unto you it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of God: but to others in parables; that seeing they might not see, and hearing they might not understand. Now the parable is this: The seed is the Word of God. Those by the way-side are they that hear; then cometh the devil, and taketh away the word out of their hearts, lest they should believe, and be saved. They on the rock are they, which, when they hear, receive the word with joy; and these have no root, which for a while believe, and in time of temptation fall away. And that which fell among thorns, are they, which, when they have heard, go forth, and are choked with cares, and riches, and pleasures of this life, and bring no fruit to perfection. But that on the good ground, are they, which in an honest and good heart, having heard the word, keep it, and bring forth fruit with patience.

Whence went He forth who is present everywhere, who fills all things; or how went He forth? Not as regards change of place, but of condition and relation

to us, coming nearer to us by clothing Himself with flesh. For because we could not go to Him, our sins fencing us out, He comes forth unto us. And wherefore came He forth? To destroy the ground teeming with thorns, to take vengeance upon the husbandmen? By no means. But to till and tend it, and to sow the word of Godliness. For by the seed is here meant His doctrine; and by the land, the souls of men; and by the sower, Himself.

What, then, becomes of this seed? Three parts perish, and one is saved.

A fourth part is saved, and this not all alike; even here is great difference.

These things He said, shewing that He instructed all without grudging^c. For as the sower makes no distinction in the land submitted to him, but simply and indifferently casts his seed, so He Himself makes no distinction of rich and poor, of wise and unwise, of slothful or diligent, of brave or cowardly; but He instructs all, fulfilling His part, although foreknowing the results; and thus it is in His power to say, "What

^c "If the day arises alike to all, and if the sun is diffused over all with the like and equal light, how much more does Christ, the true Sun and Day, bestow the light of eternal life in His Church with a like equality. Which equality we find in hidden mystery celebrated in Exodus, when the manna flowed down from heaven, and, prefiguring the things to come, shewed the nourishment of the heavenly bread, and the food of Christ coming. For there, without distinction either of sex or age, an omer was gathered alike by all. Whence it appeared that the mercy of Christ, and the heavenly grace which should afterwards follow, would be distributed equally to all; that without difference of sex, without distinction of age, without respect of persons, the gift of spiritual grace would be poured on all the people of God. True it is that the same spiritual grace which is received in baptism equally by all believers, is afterwards either diminished or increased by our own conversation and conduct. As in the Gospel, the Lord's seed is sown equally, but according to the variety of soil some is wasted, some with a rich luxuriance of produce is multiplied in a varied abundance of thirty, sixty, or one hundred fold. But again, when each was called to receive a penny, why should that which is distributed equally by God, be minished by human interpretations?" St. Cyprian, Ep. lxix.

could have been done . . . that I have not done^d ?” The prophets speak of the people as of a vine ; for, “ My beloved hath a vineyard^e ;” and, He “ brought a vine out of Egypt^f ;” but He as of seed. Why was this ? To shew that obedience now will be quicker and easier than it was then, and will presently yield its fruit.

How, then, tell me, was the greater part of the seed lost ? Not through the sower, but through the ground that received it ; that is, the soul that did not profit.

Wherefore doth He not say some, the careless, received and lost it ; some, the rich, and choked it ; some, the superficial, and betrayed it ? It is not His will to rebuke them severely, lest He should cast them into despair, but He leaves the reproof to the conscience of His hearers.

This parable He speaks, to teach His disciples that even though with them the lost be more than those who receive the word, yet they are not to despond. For this was the case even with their Lord, and He who fully foreknew that thus it would be, did not desist from sowing.

How can it be reasonable, saith one, to sow among thorns, on the rock, by the way-side ? With regard to the seeds and the earth, it cannot be reasonable ; but in the case of men’s souls and their instruction it hath its praise, and that abundantly. The husbandman, indeed, would reasonably be blamed for doing this, it being impossible for the way-side not to be a way-side, or the thorns not thorns, or for the rock to become earth ; but in things that have reason it is not so. In them there is such a thing as the rock changing and becoming rich land, and the way-side no longer lying open to all that pass by, and the rock may become a fertile field, and it is possible that the thorns may be destroyed, and the seed spring up in full security. For had it been impossible, this sower would not have sown. And if the change did not take

^d Isa. v. 4.^e Isa. v. 1.^f Ps. lxxx. 8.

place in all, this is no fault of the Sower, He having done His part, but of the soil, of them who are unwilling to be changed. If they betrayed what they received of Him, He, the Exhibitor of such love to man, is blameless.

And mark, that there is not one only way of destruction, but there are many ways, and widely different from one another.

In order, then, that none of these evils may befall us, let us, by zeal and continual watchfulness, hold fast the things that are told us; for though it be the devil who catches them away, yet it rests with ourselves whether they shall be caught away; though the plants wither, yet it is not from the heat, (He did not say because of the heat it withered, but because it had no root). Although His sayings are choked, it is not because of the thorns, but of them who suffer the thorns to spring up. For there is a way, if thou wilt, to check this evil growth, and to make the right use of our wealth. Therefore, also, He said not, the world, but, the care of the world; not riches, but, the deceitfulness of riches.

Let us not, then, lay the blame on things without, but on the corrupt mind within. For it is possible to be rich, and not to be deceived; and to be in this world and not to be choked with its cares. Riches have two contrary disadvantages: one, care, wearing us out, and bringing a darkness over us; the other, luxury, making us effeminate.

And well hath He said, the deceitfulness of riches, for all that pertains to riches is deceit. It is a name without reality. Pleasure, and glory, and magnificence, all these things are a vain show, and not a reality.

Having, therefore, spoken of the ways of destruction, He afterwards mentions the good ground: not suffering them to despair, but giving a hope of repentance, and indicating that a change is possible for all.

But if the land be good and the Sower one, and the seed the same, wherefore did one bear a hundred, one sixty, one thirty? Here, again, the difference is from the nature of the ground. For even, where the ground is good, great is the difference therein. Seest thou that not the husbandman is to be blamed, nor the seed, but the land that receives it. Not for its nature, but for its disposition. And herein, too, great is His mercy to man, that He doth not require one measure of virtue from all; but while He receives the first, and casts not out the second, He gives also a place to the third.

These things He saith, lest they that followed Him should suppose that hearing is sufficient for salvation. Nay, no one part is sufficient for salvation, but there is required first a careful hearing, and then a continual recollection; and then fortitude, and then contempt of riches, and deliverance from all that is worldly.

Knowing, then, these things, let us fortify ourselves on all sides, regarding His instructions, striking our roots deep, and cleansing ourselves from all love of worldly things. For if we do the one, neglecting the other, we shall be nothing benefited. For though we perish not in one way, yet shall we in some other. What signifies our not being ruined by riches, if we are ruined by indolence? or not by indolence, if we are by softness? The husbandman, whether he lose his crop in this way or in that, equally bewails himself. Let us not, then, congratulate ourselves upon not perishing in all these ways, but let it be our grief that we perish in any one way.

Let us burn up the thorns, for they choke the word. And this those rich men know who prove unprofitable. For, having become slaves and captives to their pleasures, they are useless even for earthly business, much more for that of heaven. Yea, and in two ways our thoughts are corrupted: both by luxury and by anxiety. For either of these were

by itself enough to overwhelm the bark; but when both concur, ye may imagine how high the billows swell^s.

When you hear that *Unto you it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of God*; you must not entertain the notion of different natures, as certain heretics do, who think that some men are of a nature that must perish, others of a nature to be saved; but rather believe that some are so constituted, that their will leads them to better or worse. Add, then, to the words, *To you it is given*, "If willing and worthy^h."

^s St. Chrysostom, Hom. on St. Matthew xiii.

^h St. Greg. Nazianzen, Catena.

QUINQUAGESIMA SUNDAY.

THE EPISTLE.

1 CORINTHIANS xiii. 1—13.

“Though I speak with the tongues,” &c.

He possesseth all things to no useful end, who hath not that one by which he may use all others well. So, then, let us embrace Charity^a.

Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal.

Dost thou see to what point Paul first rises, and to what he afterwards descends? “Should I even so speak as angels are wont to discourse unto each other, without charity I am nothing, yea rather a burden and an annoyance; I am become as sounding brass, a thing senseless and inanimate; emitting a sound indeed, but without meaning, and in vain.”

And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing.

He stops not at the gift of tongues, but, beginning from the less, he ascends to the greater gifts, and naming each, he comes at last to the mother and fountain of them all,—*though I have all faith.*

And as he spoke of each gift, as in its highest degree, adding to the tongues of men, that is, of all nations, the tongues of angels; and to the gift of prophecy the understanding of all mysteries and all knowledge; so here also he is not content to say *all faith*, but adds

^a St. Augustine, N. T. Ser. xxxviii. 21.

even that which Christ spoke of as greatest, so *that I could remove mountains*. Yet he saith, if I *have not charity, I am nothing*.

And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing.

What, then, is the testimony of Christ concerning almsgiving and death? To the rich man He saith, "If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, . . . and come and follow Me^b." And of love to one's neighbour He saith, "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends^c." But "I declare," saith Paul, "that even if we should lay down life for God's sake, and not merely lay it down, but even give our body to be burned, we shall have no advantage if we love not our neighbour. Well, then, the saying that the gifts are of no great profit without charity, is not marvellous, since our gifts are a secondary consideration to our way of life. At any rate, many have possessed gifts, and yet on becoming vicious have been punished; as those who prophesied in Christ's Name, and cast out devils, and wrought many wonderful works, like Judas the traitor; while others, exhibiting as believers a pure life, have needed nothing else in order to their salvation. Wherefore, that the gifts should, as I said, require purity of life to be added to them is no marvel; but that even an exact life should avail nothing without charity, this brings strongly out the intensity of expression, and causes great perplexity. Especially, too, when Christ appears to adjudge His great rewards to the giving up our possessions, and to the perils of martyrdom. For as I before observed, to the rich man He saith, "If thou wilt be perfect, go sell thy goods, and give to the poor, . . . and come and follow Me;" and discoursing with the disciples of martyrdom, He saith, "He that loseth

^b St. Matt. xix. 21.

^c St. John xv. 13.

his life for My sake shall find it^d;" and, "Whosoever shall confess Me before men, him will I confess also before My Father which is in heaven^e." Great, indeed, is the difficulty of this achievement, and well-nigh surpassing nature itself; and this is known, and known full well, to such as have had the crown of martyrdom vouchsafed to them. No language can set it before us, so exceedingly wonderful is it, to so noble a soul doth the deed belong.

But, nevertheless, this so wonderful thing Paul said was of no great profit without charity, even though it have the giving up of one's goods joined with it. Wherefore, then, hath he thus spoken? This will I now endeavour to explain.

The point proposed for enquiry, is, How, after Christ had said that both these belong to perfection, Paul affirms that without charity they are imperfect? Not contradicting Him, God forbid! but harmonizing with Him, and that exactly. For so in the case of the rich man, He did not merely say, "Sell thy goods and give to the poor," but He added, "And come, follow Me." Now not even the following Him proves any man a disciple of Christ, so completely as the loving one another. For, "By this shall all men know," saith He, "that ye are My disciples, if ye have love one to another^f."

And the charity which He requires is fervent; wherefore He added, Even as "The Son of Man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give His Life a ransom for many^g;" pointing out that we ought so to love, as even to die for our Beloved. For this above all is to love Him. Wherefore He saith to Peter, If thou lovest Me, "Feed My sheep^h."

And that ye may learn how great a work it is, let us sketch it out in word, since in deeds we see it nowhere appearing; and let us consider if it were every-

^d St. Matt. x. 39.

^e St. Matt. x. 32.

^f St. John xiii. 35.

^g St. Mark x. 45.

^h St. John xxi. 16.

where in abundance, how great would be the benefit. There would then be no need of laws, or tribunals, or punishments, or avenging, or any such thing; since if all loved, and were beloved, no man would injure another. Yea, murder, and strife, and war, and division, and rapine, and fraud, and all evils would be removed, and vice be unknown even in name.

Again, herein is the marvellous part of charity; all other good things have their evils yoked with them; he that gives up his possessions is oftentimes puffed up on this account; the eloquent is filled with a wild passion for glory; the humble, on this very ground, too often thinks highly of himself in secret. But charity is free from every such mischief.

Do not, I pray, suppose one loving person only in the world, but all alike loving, and then wilt thou perceive the excellency of charity. Or rather, suppose one single person both beloved and loving; why, he will so live on earth as if it were heaven, and in the enjoyment of a perfect calm. For from envy, and from wrath, and from jealousy, and pride, and vain-glory, and evil concupiscence, and from every profane love, such a man will keep his own soul pure; and, even as no one would do himself an injury, so neither would this man do an injury to his neighbours. Being such an one, he will stand with Gabriel himself, even while he still walks on earth.

Such, then, is he that hath charity. But he that works miracles, and hath perfect knowledge, without charity, though he raise ten thousand from the dead, will not be much profited,—broken off as he is from other men, and separated from his fellow-servants.

Charity is stronger than a wall; she is firmer than adamant. Or, if thou canst name something stronger than these, the firmness of love transcends it. Neither wealth nor poverty overcometh her; nay, rather if there were love, there would be no poverty, no excessive wealth, but only that which is good in each

estate. For from the one we should reap its abundance, from the other its freedom from care; and should neither have to undergo the anxieties of riches, nor the dread of poverty.

Charity suffereth long, and is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up.

Do not pass by hastily, beloved, the things here spoken, but examine each one with much care, that thou mayst know the treasure which is in charity, and the art of the painter. Consider now from what point he begins, and what he sets first as the cause of all her excellencies,—long-suffering. This is the root of all self-denial. And he adds, *is kind*; for there are some who practise long-suffering not for their own self-denial, but for the punishment of those who have provoked them. *Envieth not*. It is possible to be long-suffering and yet envious. *Vaunteth not itself*; i.e. is not rash. For it renders him who loves considerate, and grave, and steady in his movements. In truth, a defect in this point is one mark of those who love unlawfully. Whereas he to whom this true love is known, is of all men the most entirely free from these evils. For when there is no anger within, both rashness and insolence are cast out. Charity, taking her seat in the soul, like a good husbandman suffers not any of these thorns to spring up.

Is not puffed up. We see many who think highly of themselves on the score of these very excellencies, but love purges this out.

*Doth not behave herself unseemly*¹. “Nay why,” would he say, “do I say she is *not puffed up*, when she is so far from this, that in suffering the very worst for him whom she loves, she doth not even count it an unseemliness?” Again, he did not say she suffereth unseemliness, bearing the shame nobly;

¹ Or, “Doth not think herself treated unseemly.” “There is no mean or lowly thing which for the brethren’s sake she refuses to do, under the notion that to do it would be unseemly.” Theodoret.

but, she doth not even entertain any sense at all of the shame. If the lovers of money endure all manner of reproach for the sake of sordid gain, and, far from hiding their faces, do even exult in it, much more he that hath this approved charity, will count nothing whatsoever to be refused, for the safety's sake of those whom he loves. Nay, nor will anything that he can suffer shame him.

And that we may not take our example from that which is base, let us examine this as applied to Christ, and then shall we see its force. Our Lord Jesus Christ was spit upon and beaten with rods by pitiful slaves, and not only did He not count it an unseemliness, but exulted and called it glory. He brought in a robber and murderer with Himself into Paradise, and He discoursed with an harlot; He allowed her to kiss His Feet, and to bedew His Body with her tears, and to wipe them away with her hair, and this amid a company of spectators who were enemies; and He counted it not a disgrace, for love doeth nothing unseemly.

Thus fathers, though they be the chief of philosophers or of orators, are not ashamed to lisp with their children; and should the children become vicious, the parents go on correcting, caring for them, warding off the reproaches they incur, and yet are not ashamed. For love doth nothing unseemly, but as it were, with certain golden wings covereth all the offences of the beloved.

Seeketh not her own. This is friendship, that the lover and the beloved should no longer be two, but, in a manner, one single person; a thing which can in no way take place except through love. Seek not, then, thine own, that thou mayest find thine own. For he that seeks his own finds not his own, wherefore Paul saith, "Let no man seek his own, but every man another's^k."

Is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil.

^k 1 Cor. x. 24.

He doth not say, "though provoked, she overcometh," but, is not even provoked. And he said not, "worketh no evil," but, not even *thinketh* any evil. How, then, could she work any, or how be provoked, who doth not even endure to entertain an evil suspicion, but with whom is the fountain of all affection?

Rejoiceth not in iniquity; i.e. doth not exult over those that suffer ill; and not this only, but also, what is much more, *rejoiceth in the truth*. "She feels pleasure," saith he, "with them that are well spoken of;" as he saith, "Rejoice with them that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep¹."

Seest thou how by degrees charity makes her nursing an angel? For when he is void of anger, and pure from envy, and free from every tyrannical passion, consider that even from the nature of man he is delivered henceforth, and hath arrived in port, hath attained to the very serenity of the angels.

Nevertheless Paul is not yet content, but hath something even greater to say. According to his plan of stating last the strongest points, he saith,

Beareth all things. From her long-suffering spirit, from her goodness, she beareth all things. Whether insults, or stripes, or death. The Apostle has shewn the power of charity, but he shews its goodness by what follows:

Hopeth all things, believeth all things, endureth all things. She doth not despair of any good thing in the beloved, but even though he be worthless, she continues to correct, to provide, to care for him. *Believeth all things*. She doth not merely hope, but from her great affection believeth. And if things should not turn out according to her hope, but should prove evil instead of good, even this she bears, for she *endureth all things*.

Charity never faileth.

He putteth the crown on the arch. For what means

¹ Rom. xii. 15.

it that she faileth not? Charity is not severed, she is not dissolved by endurance, since, happen what will, he that loves can never hate. This, then, is the greatest of her excellencies.

And now, having shewn her to be exceeding great, Paul, by a fresh comparison, elevates her, saying,

But whether there be prophecies, they shall fail; whether there be tongues, they shall cease.

Both these were brought in, in order to the faith; therefore, when that is everywhere sown abroad, these are henceforth superfluous; but the loving one another shall not cease, rather it shall increase, both here and hereafter, and hereafter even more than here. For here there are many things that weaken our love, —wealth, business, passions of the body, disorders of the soul; but there none of these things shall be.

But though it be no marvel that prophecies and tongues should fail, it may cause some perplexity that knowledge should be done away, for he adds,

Whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away. What! are we then to live in ignorance? Far from it. Nay, it is probable that our knowledge will then be perfected, wherefore he saith later, *Then shall I know, even as also I am known.* In order that you might not suppose knowledge to be done away in the same manner as prophecy and the tongues, he was not silent after saying, *it shall vanish*, but immediately subjoined,

We know in part, and we prophesy in part. But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away.

It is not, then, knowledge itself that is done away, but the circumstance that our knowledge is in part. We shall not know only as much as now, but much more.

Next he points out how great is the difference between our present and our future knowledge, and shews our present deficiency to be no small one, saying,

When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child; but when I became a man, I put away childish things.

And by another example he displays the same thing, saying,

For now we see through a glass; and then, because the glass sets the thing before us but imperfectly, he adds, darkly.

But then face to face; not as though God had a face, but to express the notion of greater clearness and perspicuity of vision. Seest thou how we learn by degrees?

Now I know in part; but then shall I know as I am known.

If Paul, who knew so much, was but a child in comparison with what he should be, consider what those things must be to which we shall attain. If his knowledge was but as the seeing in a glass darkly, do thou infer how great a thing must be the vision of God's open face!

And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity. For faith, indeed, and hope, when the good things believed and hoped for are come, cease; and to shew this, Paul said, "Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen^m." Again; "Hope that is seen is not hope, for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope forⁿ?" So that these cease when those appear, but when hope is fulfilled and faith is realised, then will charity be at her greatest height, and in her greatest strength.

Paul hath said that charity is a great gift; he hath said that without charity our other gifts profit us nothing; he hath shadowed out her image at length. Again, in another manner, he now exalts her, saying, *But now abideth faith, hope, and charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity.* How is she the greatest? In that those pass away, but she abideth for ever^o.

^m Rom. viii. 10.

ⁿ Heb. xi. 1.

^o St. Chrysostom.

THE GOSPEL.

ST. LUKE xviii. 31—43.

“Then Jesus took unto Him the twelve,” &c.

Then Jesus took unto Him the twelve, and said unto them, Behold, we go up to Jerusalem, and all things that are written by the Prophets concerning the Son of Man shall be accomplished. For He shall be delivered unto the Gentiles, and shall be mocked, and spitefully entreated, and spitted on; and they shall scourge Him, and put Him to death; and the third day He shall rise again. And they understood none of these things; and this saying was hid from them, neither knew they the things which were spoken.

Having previously wrought miracles, and stopped the mouths of Pharisees, and discoursed with His disciples of renouncing earthly possessions,—of virginity, of humility, and of a recompense here and hereafter,—then, when He is on the point of going up to Jerusalem, Jesus discourses again with them concerning His Passion. For since it was likely that they, in their unwillingness that this should come to pass, would forget it, He is continually putting them in remembrance, exercising their minds and diminishing their pain, by the frequency of this reminder.

But He speaks with them apart, necessarily, for it was not meet that His discourse about these things should be spoken plainly, or published to the many. For if the disciples were confounded at hearing them, much more so would have been the multitude of the people.

What, then, was it not told to the people? It was indeed told to the people, but not plainly. He saith, “Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up^p ;” and, “This generation seeketh after a sign, and

^p St. John ii. 19.

there shall no sign be given to it, but the sign of the Prophet Jonas^a;" and again, "Yet a little while am I with you, . . . and ye shall seek Me, and shall not find Me^r."

Not thus to the disciples, but as He spake other things more plainly unto them, so also spake He this. But if the multitude understood not the force of His sayings, for what purpose were they spoken at all? That they might understand afterwards that He came to His Passion foreknowing it, and willing it: not in ignorance, nor by constraint. But to the disciples not for this cause only did He foretel it, but, as I have said, in order that, having been exercised by the expectation of His Passion, they might the more easily endure the reality; and that it might not confound them by coming upon them when they were unprepared. Thus, too, at the beginning, He spake simply of His death, and when they were accustomed and trained to hear of this, He added the circumstances; as, for instance, that He should be delivered to the Gentiles, that He should be mocked and scourged; and this He did, in order that when they saw the mournful events come to pass, they might from this expect the Resurrection also. For He who had not hidden from them what would give pain, and what seemed to be matter of reproach, would reasonably be believed when He foretold good things.

But they understood not His words. Surely, then, it may be said, the benefit of the prediction was lost; for if they understood not what they heard, they could not look for the event, and not looking for it, they could not be exercised by the expectation.

I will say yet another thing, still more perplexing. If they did not understand, why were they grieved? Why did Peter say, "Be it far from Thee, Lord: this shall not be unto Thee^s?" That He should die, they

^a St. Matt. xii. 39.

^r St. John vii. 33, 34.

^s St. Matt. xvi. 22.

knew; but they knew not clearly the mystery of the Incarnation; neither did they know clearly about the Resurrection; neither what He was to accomplish by both,—this was hidden from them, therefore were they pained.

Again, some they had known to have been raised from the dead by other persons, but for One to have raised Himself, and in such wise to have raised Himself as that He should no more die, this they had never known. And they understood it not, though often told them; nay, of His death they did not clearly know what it was, or how it should come upon Him. Wherefore they were amazed as they followed Him. And not alone for this cause, but to me at least it seems that He amazed them even by discoursing of His Passion.

Yet none of these things gave them courage, not even the continually hearing of His Resurrection. For besides His death, this also especially troubled them, to hear that He should be mocked and scourged. For when they considered His miracles, — the possessed whom He had delivered, the dead whom He had raised, and all the other marvellous works which He had done, they were amazed that He who had done these works should thus suffer. They fell, therefore, into perplexity, and now believed, now disbelieved, and could not understand His sayings^t.

Because the disciples, being yet carnal, were unable to receive the words of mystery, a miracle is worked before them. Before their eyes a blind man receives his sight, that by a divine work their faith may be strengthened^u.

And it came to pass, that as He was come nigh unto Jericho, a certain blind man sat by the wayside, begging: and hearing the multitude pass by, he asked what it meant. And they told him that Jesus of Nazareth passeth by.

^t St. Chrysostom, Homily on St. Matthew xx. 17, &c.

^u St. Gregory, Catena.

And he cried, saying, Jesus, Thou Son of David, have mercy on me. And they which went before rebuked him, that he should hold his peace; but he cried so much the more, Thou Son of David, have mercy on me.

And Jesus stood, and commanded him to be brought unto Him: and when he was come near, He asked him, saying, What wilt thou that I should do unto thee? And he said, Lord, that I may receive my sight. And Jesus said unto him, Receive thy sight, thy faith hath saved thee. And immediately he received his sight.

Having been brought up a Jew, the blind man was not ignorant that of the seed of David should God be born according to the flesh, and therefore he addresses Him as God, saying, *Have mercy upon me.* Would that those might imitate him who divide Christ in two*. For he speaks of Christ as God, yet calls Him Son of David. Some marvelled at the justice of his confession, and others even wished to prevent him from confessing. But by checks of this kind his ardour was not damped. For faith is able to resist all obstacles, and to triumph over all. It is a good thing to lay aside shame for the sake of divine worship. For if for money's sake some are bold, is not a righteous boldness seemly when the soul is at stake? As it follows, *He cried out the more, Son of David, &c.* The voice of one invoking Him in faith stops Christ, for He looks upon all who call upon Him in faith. And accordingly He calls the blind man to Him, and bids him draw nigh, that he who had already laid

* The Nestorian heretics. "They believed that in CHRIST there were not only two natures, but two persons: of which the one was *Divine*, even the ETERNAL WORD, and the other, which was *human*, was the Man JESUS: . . . that CHRIST was . . . to be carefully distinguished from God, who dwelt in Him as in His temple; and that Mary was to be called the mother of CHRIST, and not the mother of God.

"This heresy was condemned by the fourth General Council, that of Ephesus, in which all are anathematized who refuse to call the Virgin Mary the Mother of God."—From Hook's "Church Dictionary."

hold on Him in faith, might approach Him also in the body. The Lord asks this blind man as he drew near, *What wilt thou that I should do?* He asks the question for a purpose, not as being ignorant, but in order that those who stood by might know that the blind man sought not money, but divine power from God.

And he followed Him, glorifying God.

From which it is clear, that he was released from a double blindness, both bodily and intellectual. For he would not have glorified Him as God, had he not truly seen Him as He is. But he also gave occasion to others to glorify God; as it follows, *And all the people, when they saw it, gave praise unto God*¹.

[St. Chrysostom ends his commentary on the miracle of giving sight to the two blind men, in St. Matthew's Gospel, with the following words:—They are here transcribed, because the lesson contained in them is equally applicable to the miracle told in St. Luke, whether it be, as some think, the same with that in St. Matthew, or, as others believe, a similar miracle performed at another time.]

Let us listen to these blind men, who were better than many who see. For neither having a guide, nor being able to see Him when He came near to them, nevertheless they strove to come unto Him, and began to cry with a loud voice, and when rebuked, cried the more. For such is the nature of a constant soul, that it is borne up by the very things that might hinder it.

Christ suffered them to be rebuked, that their earnestness might be the more apparent, and that thou mightest learn that they were worthy to enjoy the benefits of their cure. Therefore He doth not so much as ask "Do ye believe?" as He doth with many, for their cry, and their coming unto Him, sufficed to make their faith manifest.

Hence learn, O beloved, that though we be very vile and outcast, yet if we cry to God with earnestness, we shall be able to effect whatsoever we desire. See, for

¹ St. Cyril, Catena.

instance, these men, how, having none of the Apostles pleading for them, but rather many trying to stop their mouths, yet they were able to overcome all hindrances, and to come unto Jesus Himself. And yet the Evangelist bears witness to no confidence of life in them, but earnestness sufficed them instead of all.

These men let us, then, imitate; though God defer the gift, though there be many hindering us, let us not desist from asking. For in this way, most of all, shall we win God to us. Behold here how not poverty, not blindness, not their being unheard, not their being rebuked by the multitude, not anything quenched their exceeding ardour. Such is the nature of a fervent and earnest soul.

What, then, saith Christ? He called them and said, *What will ye that I should do unto you? They say unto Him, Lord, that our eyes may be opened.*

Then when they said what they wished, He had compassion on them, and touched them. For His compassion alone is the cause of their cure, as for this also He came into the world; although the gift be of mercy and grace, yet it seeks for the worthy to receive it.

And that these were worthy, is manifest both from what they cried out, and from the fact that when they had received the benefit, they did not immediately afterwards hasten away, as many ungratefully do. Nay, they were not like this, but before the gift they were earnest, and after the gift were grateful. For they followed Him¹.

¹ St. Chrysostom.

A COMMENTARY

ON THE

EPISTLES AND GOSPELS IN THE BOOK OF COMMON PRAYER,

EXTRACTED FROM

Writings of the Fathers of the Holy Catholic
Church, Anterior to the Division of
the East and West,

BY A LAY MEMBER OF THE CHURCH;

WITH AN INTRODUCTORY NOTICE BY THE

DEAN OF ST. PAUL'S.

In Four Parts.

PART II.

ASH WEDNESDAY TO TUESDAY IN WHITSUN WEEK.

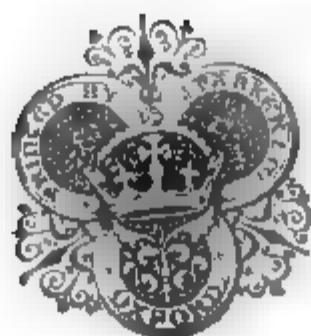


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ASH WEDNESDAY.

THE EPISTLE.

JOEL ii. 12—17.

“Turn ye even unto Me,” &c.

WITH regard to penance, God grant that it may be necessary for none of the faithful, that no one after the help of the sacred font may fall into the pit of death, and that priests may not be compelled to inculcate or to teach its tardy consolations, lest whilst by remedies they soothe the sinner, they open a road to sin. But we lay open this indulgence of our God to the miserable, not to the happy; not before sin, but after sins; nor do we announce a medicine to the whole, but to the sick. If spiritual wickedness have no power over the baptized, if none that fraud of the serpent which overthrew the first man, and which hath printed on his posterity so many marks of condemnation; if it hath retired from the world, if we have already begun to reign, if no crime steals over our eyes, none over our hands, none over our minds, then let this gift of God be cast aside, this help rejected; be no confessions heard, no groans; let a proud righteousness despise every remedy.

But if the Lord Himself hath provided these things for His own creature man, if the same Lord who hath bestowed remedies on the fallen, hath given rewards to those that stand, cease to accuse the Divine goodness, cease to erase by the interposition of your own rigour so many inscriptions of heavenly mercy; or by inexorable harshness to prohibit the gratuitous good gifts of the Lord. This is not a largesse from our own bounty. *Turn ye, saith the Lord, even to Me, and with*

fasting, and with weeping, and with mourning, and rend your heart. And again, Let the wicked man leave his ways, and the unrighteous man his thoughts, and turn unto the Lord, and he shall obtain mercy. Also after this manner crieth the Prophet, For He is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and repenteth Him of the evil. Hath the serpent so lasting a poison, and hath not Christ a remedy? Doth the devil kill in this world, and hath Christ no power here to help? Be we indeed ashamed to sin, but let us not be ashamed to repent. Be we ashamed to hazard ourselves, but not ashamed to be delivered. Who will snatch the plank from the shipwrecked mariner? Who will grudge the curing of a wound? Doth not David say, "Every night I will wash my bed, I will water my couch with my tears." And again, "I acknowledge my sin, and mine unrighteousness have I not hid;" and yet more, "I said I will confess my sins unto the Lord, and so Thou forgavest the wickedness of my sin." Did not the Prophet answer him, when penitent after the guilt of murder and adultery, saying, "The Lord also hath put away from thee thy sin." Did not confession deliver the king of Babylon, when condemned after so many sins of idolatry; and what is it that the Lord saith, "Shall he who has fallen not arise? and He who has turned not return ^a?" What answer give these many parables of our Lord, that the woman findeth the coin and rejoiceth when she hath found it: that the shepherd carrieth back the wandering sheep: that when the son was returning, all his goods wasted in riotous living, the father with kindness met him, and assigning the grounds of the rejoicing, chideth the envious brother, saying, "This my son was dead and is alive again, was lost and is found." What of him who was wounded in the way, when Levite and Priest passed by? Is he not taken care of ^b?

^a Or, (as St. Jerome from the Heb.,) "Shall he turn again, and He [God] not return?"

^b St. Pacian, Epistle I.

And now I would address those who wisely confessing their wounds, under the name of penance, neither know what penance is, nor what the cure for their wounds; and are like those who indeed lay bare their wounds and acknowledge them to the physician, but when warned what is to be applied, neglect it, and refuse the medicine. This is just as if one should say, "Lo I am sick, lo I am wounded, but I wish not to be cured." But see a thing still more foolish. Another disease is added to the original one, and a new wound inflicted. All that is injurious is applied, all that is hurtful is drunk. Under this evil especially doth our brotherhood labour, adding on to old faults new sins. Therefore hath it burst forth more grievously still into vice, and is now racked by a more grievous disease^c. What then shall I, the priest, now do, who am compelled to cure? If there is any one of you who can bear to be cut and cauterized, I still can do it. Behold the knife of the Prophet, *Turn unto the Lord your God,*

^c In order to understand the teaching of SS. Cyprian and Pacian, the dates and circumstances of their teaching must be remembered. After an interval of peace and tranquillity, in which, as it appears, the bands of discipline had been somewhat relaxed, persecution fell upon the Church; many would seem to have been so terrified by the threatenings and even the inflicted tortures of their heathen rulers, as to deny the Faith, and offer incense and sacrifice at the altars of the idol.

When the storm abated, they sought to be restored to their forfeited Christian privileges. According to the holy discipline of the Church, this could not be done without public confession of their sin, and public penance for a fixed time. They were to stand at the church doors entreating the prayers of the faithful: after a while they were admitted within the church, but only for a portion of the service, being obliged to depart with the catechumens, &c., before the celebration of the Holy Eucharist. This state of probation was a state of penance, longer or shorter according to the judgment of the bishop, in whose hands the power of binding and loosing was placed.

The sect of the Novatians at first wanted to have the "lapsed" received back into full communion upon a simple expression of their desire to be restored, and then, when the orthodox rulers in the Church insisted on the fulfilment of the appointed term of penance, the Novatians turned round, and, in the opposite extreme, refused to the lapsed any restoration whatever.

he saith, *with all your heart, and with fasting, and with weeping, and with mourning ; and rend your heart.* Fear not this cutting, most beloved, David bore it. He lay in filthy ashes, and was disfigured by a covering of rough sack-cloth. He who had been accustomed to gems and to purple hid his soul in fasting. He whom seas, whom woods, whom streams served, and the land bringing forth its promised wealth, he wasted in floods of tears those eyes with which he had beheld the glory of God. The ancestor of Mary, the Ruler of the Jewish kingdom, confessed Himself miserable. That king of Babylon, also, forsaken by all, performs penance, and is worn away by seven years of misery. His uncombed hair in wild roughness surpasses the shagginess of a lion's mane, and his hands, hooked with crooked talons, take the semblance of eagles' claws, while he eats grass as oxen, chewing the green herb. Yet this punishment commends him to God, and restores him to the kingdom once his own. Whom men shuddered at, God received, blessed through the calamity of a severer discipline.

Behold the cutting which I promised, whoso shall be able to endure it shall be healed^d.

I entreat you, most dear brethren, let each sinner confess his sin while he is yet among the living, while his confession can be accepted. Let us turn to the Lord with the whole heart, and call down the mercy of God, by expressing repentance for our offence by genuine grief. Before Him let the soul be laid prostrate ; with Him let our sadness gain peace, on Him be leant all our hopes. How we ought to entreat, Himself teaches us : *Turn ye, saith He, unto Me with all your heart, and with fasting, and with weeping, and with mourning, and rend your heart and not your garments.* To the Lord, then, let us return with all our heart. Let us appease His wrath and displeasure, with fast-

^d St. Pacian, Parænesis.

ings, with weepings, with mournings, as Himself teaches.

If any man offer prayer with his whole heart, if he groan with true misery and tears of repentance, if by a continuance of good works he bend the Lord to a pardon of his sin, He who in these words expressed His tender mercy, may shew that mercy to such a man: "When ye turn and lament, then ye shall be saved^e;" and again, "I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, saith the Lord, but that he turn from his way and live^f." And the Prophet Joel declares the graciousness of the Lord by the Lord's own word: *Turn ye, saith He, to the Lord your God, for He is merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and of great mercy, and repenteth Him of the evils* which He hath inflicted. He can shew mercy, He can repent of His purpose. If one appease His wrath, the displeasure of an angered God, by worthy supplication, He grants weapons again, wherewith the conquered may be armed, He recruits and invigorates that strength whereby his refreshed faith may be quickened. The warrior will return to his warfare, will renew the fight, will challenge the enemy, by his sufferings made only the stronger for the conflict^h.

THE GOSPEL.

ST. MATT. vi. 16—21.

"When ye fast, be not as the hypocrites," &c.

When ye fast, be not as the hypocrites, of a sad countenance: for they disfigure their faces, that they may appear unto men to fast.

Our Lord in this portion of the Sermon on the Mount roots out the most tyrannical passion of all, the eager desire of vainglory, which springs up in them that do

^e Isa. xxx. 51.

^g Joel ii. 13.

^f Ezek. xxxiii. 11; xviii. 32.

^h St. Cyprian, Treatises.

right. At first He had not discoursed about this at all, it being, indeed, superfluous, before He had persuaded them to do what they ought, to teach in what way they should do it.

But after He had taught them the duty of self-command, then He proceeds to purge away the alloy which secretly combines with it; for this disease comes not at random, but is born of the performance of the commandments.

It was needful, therefore, first to implant virtue, and then to remove the passion which blights its fruit.

And see with what He begins, with fasting, prayer, and almsgiving, for in these good deeds most especially is vainglory wont to make its haunt.

The Pharisee, for instance, was puffed up by this when He said, "I fast twice in the week, I give tithes of all that I possess¹." In his very prayer, too, he was vainglorious, making it for display.

Our Lord not only commands us to make no display, but even bids us to seek concealment: *Verily I say unto you, They have their reward.*

He said not, "Such shall not receive a reward," but, *they have it*; that is, they shall indeed receive one, not from God, but from those of whom they themselves desire to receive it. God wills not this; rather for His part He desired to bestow on men the recompense that comes from Himself; but they, seeking that which is from men, can be no longer justly entitled to receive anything from Him, for whom they have done nothing.

But thou, when thou fastest, anoint thine head, and wash thy face, that thou appear not unto men to fast, but unto thy Father which is in secret; and thy Father, which seeth in secret, shall reward thee openly.

The reward—consider how great it is. For after He had spoken of the punishment that follows upon the one course, He points out the honour derived from the other; from either side urging His hearers, and leading

¹ St. Luke xviii. 12.

them on to lofty aims. Yea, for He is persuading them to believe that God is everywhere present, and that not to this life are our interests limited, but that a yet more awful tribunal will receive us when we go hence, and that account shall be taken of all our doings, and honours and punishments shall follow; and that no one, though he seem now to be hidden from men, will then be hidden in his doings either great or small. For all this did He darkly signify when He said, *Thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly*; setting before the hearer a great and august assembly of spectators, and what he desires, that very thing bestowing on him in great abundance. "For what," saith He, "dost thou wish? Is it not to have spectators of thy good deeds? Behold, then, thou hast them. Not angels nor archangels, but the God of all." And if thou desire to have men also as spectators, neither of this doth He deprive thee at the fitting season, but rather gives it thee more abundantly. If thou shouldst now make a display, thou wilt be able to make it but to ten, or to twenty, or to one hundred. If thou take pains to lie hid now, God Himself will then proclaim thee in the presence of the whole universe. Wherefore, if thou wilt have thy good deeds displayed, hide them now, that then all may look on them with the more honour, God making them manifest—extolling them, and proclaiming them before all. Seeing, then, that by waiting a little, thou mayest both receive a reward, and reap still greater admiration; consider what folly it is to cast thyself out of both these things, and while thou art seeking thy reward from God, and while God is beholding, even at this time to summon men to the display. Why, if display must be made of our love, to our Father above all should we make it, and this most especially when our Father hath the power both to crown and to punish.

And let me add, even were there no penalty, it were not meet for him who desires glory to abandon this our

theatre, and take in exchange that of men. For who is there so grovelling as that when the king was hastening to come and see his achievements, he would let him go, and choose for his assembly of spectators poor men and beggars?

After He hath cast out the disease of vainglory, and not before, He seasonably introduces His discourse on voluntary poverty. For nothing so leads men to the love of riches as the love of glory. *Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth*¹.

Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal; for where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.

Whether ye have found by experience how what is laid up in the earth is lost, or whether ye have not so found it, yet fear lest ye should do so. Let experience reform him whom words will not reform. One cannot rise up now, one cannot go out, but all together with one voice are crying, "Woe to us, the world is falling^k." If it be falling, why dost thou not remove? If an architect were to tell thee that thy house would soon fall, wouldst thou not remove before thou didst indulge in vain lamentations? The Builder of the world telleth thee the world will soon fall, and wilt thou not believe it? Hear the voice of Him who foretelleth it; hear the counsel of Him who giveth thee warning: the voice of prediction is, "Heaven and earth shall pass away¹;" the voice of warning is, *Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth*. If, then, thou dost believe God in His prediction, if thou despise not His warning, then obey His command. He who has

¹ St. Chrysostom.

^k From this and the preceding sections it would appear as if this sermon was written at a time of some great public trouble, probably when the barbarians were ravaging Africa.

¹ St. Matt. xxiv. 35.

given thee such counsel doth not deceive thee. Thou shalt not lose what thou hast given away, but thou hast only sent it before thee. Therefore my counsel is, "Give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven^m." Thou shalt not remain without treasure, but what thou hast on earth with anxiety, thou shalt possess in heaven free from care. Transport thy goods there; I am giving thee counsel for keeping, not for losing them. "Thou shalt have," saith He, "treasure in heaven; and come and follow Me that I may bring thee to thy treasure." This is not a wasting, but a saving.

Thou puttest wheat in the low ground, and thy friend comes, who knows the nature of the corn and the land, and instructs thine unskilfulness, and says to thee, "What hast thou done? thou hast put the corn in the flat soil, in the lower land; the soil is moist; the seed will rot, and thou wilt lose thy labour." Thou answerest, "What then must I do?" "Remove it," he says, "into the higher ground." Dost thou, then, give ear to a friend who gives thee counsel about thy corn, and despisest thou God who gives thee counsel about thine heart? Thou fearest to put thy corn in the low ground, and wilt thou lose thine heart in the earth? Behold the Lord thy God [when He giveth thee counsel about thine heart] saith, *Where thy treasure is, there will thine heart be also*. Lift up, saith He, thine heart to heaven, that it rot not in the earth. It is His counsel, who wisheth to preserve thy heart, not to destroy it.

If, then, this be so, what must their remorse be who have not done thereafter? How must they now reproach themselves! We might have had in heaven what we have now lost on earth. The enemy has broken open our house; but could he have broken heaven open? He has killed the servant who was set to guard, but could he have killed the Lord who would

^m St. Matt. xix. 21.

have kept thy treasure in safety, where no thief approacheth, neither moth corrupteth. How many are now saying, "There we might have had our treasures safe, where after a little while we might have found them secure. Why have we not hearkened to our Lord? Why have we despised the admonitions of the Father, and so have suffered the invasion of the enemy?" If, then, this be good counsel, let us not be slow in taking heed to it; and if what we have must be transported, let us transport it into that place, from whence we cannot lose it. What are the poor to whom we give but our carriers, by whom we convey our goods from earth to heaven? Give then: thou art but giving to thy carrier, he carrieth what thou givest to heaven. How, sayest thou, does he carry it to heaven? What? hast thou forgotten, "Come, ye blessed of My Father, receive the kingdom; for I was an hungered and ye gave me meat:" and, "Inasmuch as ye did it to one of the least of Mine, ye did it to Meⁿ." If thou hast not despised the beggar that standeth before thee, consider to whom what thou gavest him hath come. "Inasmuch," saith He, "as ye did it to the least of one of Mine, ye did it unto Me." He hath received it, who gave thee wherewith to give. He hath received it, who in the end will give His own self to thee^o.

ⁿ St. Matt. xxv. 34, &c.

^o St. Augustine, N. T.

THE FIRST SUNDAY IN LENT.

THE EPISTLE.

2 COR. vi. 1—10.

Ve then, as workers together with Him," &c.

Ye then, as workers together with Him, beseech you that ye receive not the grace of God in vain.

God, when Himself beseeching, doth not barely beseech, but sets forth these His claims, namely, that He gave His Son, the Just One, who did not so much as now sin, and made Him to be sin for us, that we might be made righteous*. Having which claims, and seeing God, He ought not to beseech, and to beseech, and men who had offended Him. Rather ought He daily to be besought by them, nevertheless He beseecheth. But *we beseech*, having no claim of our own privilege, but this only, that we beseech for God, who has displayed such goodness. And what we beseech is that ye would receive the benefit and not reject the

Be persuaded, therefore, by us, and *receive not grace in vain* : for lest the Corinthians should think

believing on Him that calleth is of itself reconciliation, Paul adds these words, requiring that earnestness which respects the life. For, for one who hath been freed from sins, and made a friend, to wallow on in these is to return into a state of enmity, and 'receive the grace in vain,' in respect of the life.

we reap no great benefit from *the grace* towards salvation, if we live impurely; nay, we are even increased, having the greater aggravation of our sins, but after such knowledge and such a gift we have returned to our former vices.

* See 2 Cor. v. 21.

Then he reminds them of a prophecy, urging and compelling them to bestir themselves, in order to lay hold of their own salvation.

For, saith He, I have heard thee in a time accepted, and in the day of salvation have I succoured thee; behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation^b.

Not only by the greatness of the blessings and the loving-kindness of God doth Paul urge them, but also by the shortness of the time. Wherefore also he saith elsewhere, "For now is our salvation nearer;" and again, "The Lord is at hand^c;" but here he inciteth them, not only from the fact that the remainder of the time is short, but also from its being the only season available for salvation, for, *Behold, He saith, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation.* Let us, therefore, not let slip the favourable opportunity, but display a zeal worthy of the grace. Knowing both the shortness and the suitableness of the time, therefore it is that we press forward.

The accepted time—what is this? The time of the gift, the time of the grace, when it is appointed not that an account should be required of our sins, nor the penalty exacted, but that, besides being delivered, we should also enjoy ten thousand goods, righteousness, sanctification, and all others. For how much toil would it not have behoved us to undergo in order to obtain this time? But, behold, without our toiling at all, it hath come, bringing remission of all that is past. Wherefore He calls it *accepted*, because He both accepted those that had transgressed, and not only accepted, but also advanced them to the highest honour. Just as when a monarch arrives, it is a time not for judgment, but for grace and pardon. For this He calls it *accepted*. Whilst then we are yet in the lists, while we are at work in the vineyard, whilst the eleventh hour is left us, let us draw nigh and give

^b Isa. xlix. 8.

^c Rom. xiii. 11; Phil. iv. 5.

proof of life ; for it is now easy. For he that striveth for the mastery at such a time, when so great a gift hath been shed forth, when so great grace, will easily obtain the prize. In the case of monarchs here below, at the time of their festivals, and when they appear in regal dress, he who bringeth a small offering receiveth large gifts ; but on the days in which they sit in judgment, much strictness, much sifting is requisite. Let us also strive for the mastery in the time of this gift. It is a day of grace, of grace divine ; wherefore even with ease shall we obtain the crown. For if, when laden with so great evils, He both received and delivered us ; when delivered, and contributing our part, shall He not much more accept us.

Giving no offence in anything, that our ministry be not blamed ; but in all things approving ourselves as the ministers of God.

He persuades them from the consideration not of the time only, but also of those who had successfully laboured with them. And behold with what absence of pride ! for he said not, Look at us, how we are such and such, but it is only to do away accusation that he relates his own conduct. For it is not the same thing to be free from accusation, and to exhibit such characters as in everything to be seen to be the *ministers of God*. Neither is it the same thing to be quit of accusation and to be covered with praises. And he said not *appearing*, but *approving ourselves*, that is, *proving*. Then he mentions how they became such. How, then, was it ?

In much patience, in afflictions, in necessities, in distresses, in stripes, in imprisonments, in tumults.

Every one of these by itself was intolerable, but when all, and all at once, assail, consider what a soul they need. Then, along with the things from without, he mentions those imposed by himself.

In labours, in watchings, in fastings ; by pureness.

In these words he alludes to the labours in which he

toiled as he went about and wrought, the nights in which he taught, or even worked; and along with these he neglected not fasting also, although these might have sufficed in the place of ten thousand fasts. *By pureness* here, he means either chasteness, or general purity or incorruptness, or even his freely preaching the Gospel.

By knowledge.

What means *by knowledge*? By wisdom such as is from God, that which is truly knowledge, not the knowledge of those that seem to be wise, and boast of their acquaintance with the heathen discipline, but are deficient in true knowledge.

By long-suffering, by kindness.

This, also, is a great note of a noble soul, though exasperated and goaded on every side, to bear all with long-suffering. Then to shew how he became such, he added,

By the Holy Ghost.

For by Him, he saith, we do all these good works. And observe when it is that he has mentioned the aid of the Holy Ghost, namely, after he had set forth what was from himself. Moreover, he seems to me to say another thing herein, which is, that we have both been filled with abundance of the Spirit, and hereby also give a proof of our apostleship, in that we have been accounted worthy of spiritual gifts. For though this be of grace, yet was he himself the cause, who by his good works and his toils had attracted that grace. And if any should assert that besides all this he shews that in his use of the gifts of the Spirit he gave none offence, he would not miss of his meaning. For it is possible, even in receiving a gift of the Spirit, not to use it aright (even as they who received the gift of tongues, and were lifted up, were blamed); "but not so we," he saith, "but in the Spirit also, that is in the gifts also, we have been blameless."

In love unfeigned. This was the cause of all those

good things; this made him what he was; this caused the Spirit also to abide with him, by whose aid all things were rightly done by him.

By the word of truth,—a thing he says in many places, that “we have continued neither to handle the word of God deceitfully, nor to adulterate it.”

By the power of God. That which he always doth, ascribing nothing to himself, but the whole to God, and imputing whatsoever he hath done aright to Him; this he hath done here also. For since he hath uttered great things, and affirmed that in all things he had manifested an irreproachable life and exalted wisdom, he ascribes this to the Spirit and to God. For those were not commonplace things which he had said. If it be a difficult thing even for one who lives in quiet to do aright, and be irreproachable, consider him who was harassed by so great temptations, and yet shone forth through all, consider of what a spirit he was.

By the armour of righteousness. He shews that afflictions are arms, which not only strike not down him who bears them, but do even fortify and make him stronger.

By honour and dishonour. What sayest thou? That thou enjoyest honour, and settest this down as a great thing? “Yes,” he saith. And why, forsooth? To bear dishonour is indeed a great thing, but to partake of honour requires not a vigorous soul. Yes, indeed, a vigorous and exceeding great soul, that he who enjoys it may not be thrown and break his neck. It was for the sake of honour from the multitude that many of the Jews would not believe. They feared not lest they should be punished, but they feared lest they should be put out of the synagogue. And we may see numbers who, having despised all other dangers, have been worsted by honour. And for this reason Paul glories in honour as well as in dishonour, for he shone equally in both. But how is it a weapon of righteousness? Because the teachers being held in

honour, induceth many unto godliness. And, besides, this is a proof of good works, and this glorifieth God.

By evil report and good report. Not only did he nobly bear those things which happen to the body, the *afflictions* and what else he enumerated, but those also which touch the soul; for neither are these wont to disturb slightly. Isaiah exhorteth concerning this, saying, "Fear ye not the reproach of men, neither be ye overcome by their revilings^d." And, again, Christ also to His disciples, "When they shall speak all manner of evil against you falsely, rejoyce, and be exceeding glad, for great is your reward in heaven^e." He would not have made the reward so great, had not the contest been great. To Job the reproaches of his friends appeared more grievous than the worms and the sores. For there is nothing, there is nothing more intolerable to those in affliction than a word which stings the soul.

As deceivers, and yet true. This is *by evil report and good report*.

As unknown, and yet well known. This is *by honour and dishonour*; for by some they were well known and much sought after, whilst others deigned not to know them at all.

As dying, and behold we live. As under sentence of death and condemned, which was in itself also a matter of dishonour, but he said this both to shew the unspeakable power of God and their own patience. "For so far as those were concerned who plotted against us, we were dead, and this is what all suppose us, but by God's aid we escaped these dangers." Then, to manifest also on what account God permits these things, he adds,

As chastened, and not killed. Shewing that the gain accruing to them from their temptations was great even before the time of the reward; and that their enemies did them service against their will.

^d Isa. li. 7.

^e St. Matt. v. 11, 12.

As sorrowful, yet alway rejoicing. By those that are without we are indeed suspected of being in despair, but we give no heed to them. Yea, we have our pleasure to the full. And Paul saith not only *rejoicing*, but addeth also the perpetuity of the joy, for he says *always rejoicing*. What, then, can come up to this life, wherein, although dangers so great assault, the joy is greater?

As poor, yet making many rich. Some affirm that the spiritual riches are spoken of here, but I would say that so also are the carnal. For in these also they were rich, having, after a new kind of manner, the houses of all open to them. And this, too, he signified by what follows, saying,

As having nothing, yet possessing all things. How can this be? Yea, rather, how can the opposite be? For he that possesseth many things hath nothing, and he that hath nothing possesseth the goods of all. If thou marvellest how it is possible for one that hath nothing to have all things, let us bring forth this man himself who commanded the world, and was lord not of this substance only, but “if it had been possible,” he says, “ye would have plucked out your own eyes, and have given them to me¹.”

Now all these things he says to instruct us not to be disturbed at the opinions of the many, though they call us deceivers, though they know us not, though they count us condemned and appointed unto death; to be in sorrow, to be in poverty, to have nothing, to be (us who rejoice) desponding; because even the sun is not clear to the blind, nor the pleasure of the sane intelligible to the mad. For the faithful only are right judges of these matters, and are not pleased and pained at the same things as other men. If one who knew nothing of the games were to see a boxer with wounds upon him, and wearing a crown, he would think him in pain on account of the wounds, not understanding the pleasure which the crown would give him. These,

¹ Gal. iv. 15.

therefore, because they know what things we suffer, but do not know for what we suffer them, naturally think that there is nought besides the suffering. For they see the wrestling and the dangers, but not the prizes and the crowns, and the subject of the contest. What, then, were the *all things* which Paul possessed, when he said, *As having nothing, and yet possessing all things?* Things temporal, things spiritual. He whom the cities received as an angel, for whom they would have plucked out their own eyes; he for whom they laid down their own necks, had not he all things that were theirs? And if thou desirest to see things spiritual, thou wilt find him in these also especially rich. For he that was so dear to the King of all as to share with the Lord of the angels in unspeakable things, was not he more opulent than all men, had he not all things? Devils else had not been subject to him, suffering and disease had not fled before him^s.

THE GOSPEL.

ST. MATTHEW iv. 1—11.

“Then was Jesus led up,” &c.

Then was Jesus led up of the Spirit into the wilderness, to be tempted of the devil.

Then. When? After the descent of the Spirit^h, after the Voice that came from above, and said, “This is My Beloved Son, in whom I am well pleasedⁱ.” And what was marvellous, this was of the Holy Spirit, for He it was who led Him up into the wilderness. For since, with a view to our instruction, Christ both did and underwent all things; He endured also to be led thither, and to wrestle with the devil, in order that each one of those who are baptized, if after his baptism

^s St. Chrysostom.

^h St. Chrysostom, Hom. xiii., p. 173.

ⁱ St. Matt. iii. 17.

he have to endure greater temptations than before, may not be troubled as if this result were unexpected, but may continue to endure all things with courage, as in the natural course of events.

Yea, for therefore didst thou take up arms, not to be idle, but to fight. For this cause God doth not hinder temptations as they arise ; first, to teach thee that thou art now become much stronger than before ; next, that temptation having power to repress thee, thou mayst continue humble, not being exalted by the greatness of thy gifts ; thirdly, in order that that wicked demon, who is for a while doubtful about thy desertion of him, may, by the touchstone of temptation, be well assured that thou hast utterly forsaken and departed from him ; fourthly, that thou mayst in this way be made stronger and better-tempered than steel ; fifthly, that thou mayst obtain a clear manifestation of the treasures intrusted to thee.

For the devil would not have assailed thee unless he had seen thee brought unto greater honours. Thus, for example, in the beginning he attacked Adam, because he saw him in the enjoyment of great dignity ; and he arrayed himself against Job, because he saw him crowned and proclaimed by the God of all.

Wherefore, then, saith Jesus, "Pray that ye enter not into temptation^k?" The evangelist doth not shew thee Jesus simply going up, but *led up*, according to the principle of the economy ; signifying obscurely by this that we ought not of ourselves to rush upon temptation, but being led thereto, manfully to resist it.

Behold for what sort of opportunity the devil watches. For, not in His fast, but in His hunger, he approaches Him, by His instructing thee how great a good fasting is, and how it is a most powerful shield against the devil ; and that after the font men should give themselves up, not to luxury, and drunkenness,

^k St. Matt. xxvi. 41.

and a full table, but to fasting. For this cause Christ fasted, not as needing it Himself, but to instruct us.

Having then *fasted forty days and forty nights*, He *was afterward an-hungred*; allowing the devil a way to approach, and a point to lay hold of, in order that by actual conflict He might shew us how to prevail and be victorious. Just so do wrestlers; when teaching their pupils how to overcome, they voluntarily engage with others in the lists, that in the persons of their antagonists they may afford their pupils the means of seeing and learning the mode of conquest. The same thing was now done. For it being the will of Christ to draw the devil on so far, He both made His hunger known to him, and awaited his approach, and as He waited for him, so He dashed him to earth, once, twice, and three times, with such ease as became Him.

But that we may not, by hurrying over these victories, lessen the profit you may gain from them, let us begin from the first assault, and examine each with exact care.

Thus, after He was an-hungred, it is said *the tempter came*, and said unto Him, *If Thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread.*

For because he had heard a Voice from above, saying, "This is My Beloved Son," and had heard also John bearing so great witness concerning Him, and after that saw Him an-hungred, he was henceforth in perplexity, and neither could believe on the one hand that He was a mere man, because of the things spoken concerning Him, nor on the other that He was the Son of God, seeing Him as he did in hunger. And much as when coming to Adam at the beginning, he feigns things that are not, that he may learn the things that are; even so here also, not knowing the unutterable mystery of the economy, and who He may be that is come, he attempts to weave other nets, whereby he thought to know that which was hidden and obscure.

And what saith he? *If Thou be the Son of God, com-*

mand that these stones be made bread. He said not “because Thou art an-hungred,” but *If Thou be the Son of God*; thinking to cheat Him with flattery. Wherefore also he was silent touching the hunger, that he might not seem to be upbraiding Him by alleging it. For not knowing the greatness of the economy which was going on, he supposed this hunger to be a reproach to Him; wherefore craftily flattering Him, he makes mention of His dignity only.

What, then, saith Christ? To signify that there was nothing shameful in it, nor unbecoming His wisdom, that which the other had passed over in silence He brings forward openly, saying,

Man shall not live by bread alone.

So that He begins with the necessity of the body. But mark, I pray thee, the craft of that wicked demon, and whence he begins his wrestlings, and how he doth not forget his profane art; for by the very means whereby he cast out the first man, and encompassed him with thousands of evils, by these same means here likewise he weaves his deceit, namely, the incontinence of the belly. But Christ, to shew that the virtuous man is not compelled even by this tyranny to do anything that is unseemly, first suffers hunger, then submits not to what is urged on Him for its relief; teaching us—though it be no transgression which the devil commands—yet not even so, to obey.

Therefore did He not consent to what was proposed. But what saith He? *Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.* Now His meaning is this: “God is able, even by a word, to nourish the hungry man;” thus bringing the devil an answer out of the ancient Scriptures, and teaching us, though we hunger, yea, whatever we suffer, never to fall away from our Lord.

But if a man say, “Still He should have displayed Himself,” I would ask, with what intent and for what reason? For not at all, in order that he might himself

believe, did the devil so speak, but that he might, as he thought, over-argue Him into unbelief; for in this way the first of mankind, not putting earnest faith in God, were beguiled and over-argued by the devil. For promising them the contrary of what God had said, he puffed them up with vain hopes, and brought them to unbelief, and so cast them out of the blessings they actually possessed. But Christ shews Himself not to have consented either to him then, or afterwards to the Jews his partizans, in their demand for signs. In both cases instructing us, whatever we may have power to do, yet to do nothing vainly or at random, and not even when want is urgent to obey the devil.

What, then, doth this accursed one? Overcome, and unable to persuade Him to do his bidding, even when pressed by great hunger, he proceeds to another thing, saying,

If Thou be the Son of God, cast Thyself down; for it is written, He shall give His angels charge concerning Thee, and in their hands shall they bear Thee up.

What can the reason be that at each temptation the devil begins with, *If Thou be the Son of God?* He doth at this time much the same as he did in the case of our first parents, that is, as he then spake falsely of God, saying, "In the day ye eat your eyes shall be opened¹;" thereby intending to signify that they were beguiled and deceived, and had received no benefit. So now in this case he insinuates the same thing, saying, "In vain hath God called Thee Son, and beguiled Thee by His gift; if this be not so, give us some clear proof that Thou art of that power." Then, because Christ had answered him from Scripture, he also brings in a testimony from the prophet.

What, then, doth Christ? He is not indignant, nor provoked, but with extreme gentleness again answers him from the Scriptures, saying, *Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God.* Teaching us that we must over-

¹ Gen. iii. 5.

come the devil, not by miracles, but by forbearance and long-suffering, and that we should do nothing for display and vainglory.

And Christ, even when these things are said, doth not yet reveal Himself, but as man, for a while, discourses with him. For the sayings, *Man shall not live by bread alone*, and, *Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God*, suited one not revealing Himself, but representing Himself as one of the many.

Again, the devil taketh Him up into an exceeding high mountain, and sheweth Him all the kingdoms of the world, and saith unto Him, All these things will I give Thee, if Thou wilt fall down and worship me. Then saith Jesus unto him, Get thee hence, Satan; for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and Him only shalt thou serve. Then the devil leaveth Him.

For since the devil was now arrived at sinning against the Father, claiming for his own all that is the Father's, and endeavouring to make himself out to be God, as artificer of the universe, He rebuked him. Yet not even then with vehemence, but simply, *Get thee hence, Satan*, which itself had in it something of command rather than of rebuke. For when He said to him, *Get thee hence*, He caused him to take to flight, and the devil brought not against Him any other temptation.

And how saith Luke that he ended all temptation^m? To me it seems that in mentioning the chief of the temptations he had spoken of all, as though the rest were included in these. For the things that form the substance of innumerable evils are these;—to be a slave to the belly; to act from vainglory; to be in subjection to the madness of riches. Which accordingly that accursed one considering, he set last the most powerful of all, I mean the desire of gain, and though originally, and from the beginning he was working round to this, yet he kept it for the last, as being of

● ^m St. Luke iv. 13.

more force than the rest. For truly this is ever his mode of attack, to bring those things forward last which seem to have the most power.

How, then, are we to get the better of him? In the way which Christ hath taught us, by fleeing to God for refuge; neither being depressed in famine, as believing in God who is able to feed even with a word, nor amidst whatever good things we may receive, tempting Him who gave them. Again, being content with the glory which is from above, making no account of that which is of men, and on every occasion despising what is beyond our need. For nothing so makes us to fall under the power of the devil as doth covetousness.

And behold angels came and ministered unto Him. When the assault was going on, He suffered them not to appear, that He might not thereby drive away the prey; but after He had vanquished him in all points and caused him to take to flight, then they appear, that thou mayst learn that after thy victories which are copied from His, Angels will receive thee also, applauding thee and waiting on thee as guards in all things. For, as I have already said, Christ on this occasion exhibits many things which we ourselves are to enjoy.

Forasmuch, then, as all these things have been done for thee, do thou emulate and imitate His victory. And should any one of those who are the servants of that evil spirit, and savour the things that be of him, approach thee, upbraiding thee and saying, "If thou art great and wonderful, remove the mountain," be not troubled nor confounded, but answer with meekness, saying some such words as thou hast heard thy Lord say, *Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God.*

Or should he, offering glory, and dominion, and measureless wealth, enjoin thee to worship him, do thou stand manfully, for not only with our common Lord did the devil so deal, but every day he brings his machinations to bear on each one of His servants.

Not in mountains only, and in wildernesses, in solitude, but in cities, in market-places, and in courts of justice, and by means of our fellow-men, even of our own kindred. What, then, must we do? Disbelieve him altogether, and stop our ears against him and hate him when he flatters, and the more he proffers, so much the more avoid him. Yea, for he is an implacable enemy, and hath entered upon a war against us that excludes all trials. We are not so earnest for our salvation as he is for our ruin. Let us then oppose him, not with words only, but also with works; not in heart only, but also in deed; and let us do none of the things which he approves, for so shall we do those which God approves. Yea, for he makes many promises, not that he may give, but that he may take. He promises the spoils of rapine, that he may deprive us of the kingdom and of righteousness; and he sets treasures in the earth as traps, that he may deprive us both of them, and of the treasures in heaven; he would have us be rich here, that we may be poor there ^a.

^a St. Chrysostom.

THE SECOND SUNDAY IN LENT.

THE EPISTLE.

1 THESS. iv. 1—8.

“ We beseech you, brethren, and exhort,” &c.

We beseech you, brethren, and exhort you by the Lord Jesus, that as ye have received of us how ye ought to walk, and to please God, so ye could abound more and more. For ye know what commandments we gave you by the Lord Jesus. For this is the will of God, even your sanctification, that ye should abstain from fornication; that every one of you should know how to possess his vessel in sanctification and honour; not in the lust of concupiscence, even as the Gentiles which know not God; that no man go beyond and defraud his brother in any matter; because that the Lord is the avenger of all such, as we also have forewarned you, and testified. For God hath not called us unto uncleanness, but unto holiness. He therefore that despiseth despiseth not man, but God, who hath also given unto us His holy Spirit.

Righteousness must be loved; and in advancing to this righteousness there are steps. The first is, that the things which give delight be not preferred to the love of righteousness. This is the first step. What is that which I have said? That among all the things which give delight, righteousness itself should give thee more delight; not that other things should give none, but that it should give more. For some things naturally give delight to our infirmity, as meat and drink delight the hungry and the thirsty; as this light which is shed from heaven when the sun is risen,

or which shines from the stars and moon, of which is kindled on the earth by lights relieving the darkness of the eyes, delights us; a musical voice and most sweet melody give delight; a goodly odour gives delight; whatsoever things pertain to any pleasure of the flesh delight our touch. And of all these things which delight us, in the senses of the body, some are lawful. For, as I said, these grand spectacles of nature delight the eyes; but the spectacles of the theatres delight the eyes also. The one are lawful, the other unlawful^a. A holy psalm sweetly toned delights the ear; but the songs of stage-players delight the ear also. The one lawfully, the other unlawfully. Flowers and aromatics delight the smell; and these too are God's creatures; frankincense on the altars of devils delights the smell also. The one lawfully, the other unlawfully. Unforbidden food delights the taste; the feasts of sacrilegious sacrifices delight the taste also. The one lawfully, the other unlawfully. The matrimonial union gives delight; that which is not hallowed gives delight also. The one lawfully, the other unlawfully. Ye see, dearly beloved, that in these things of the body, there are lawful and unlawful delights. Let righteousness in such wise delight, as to overcome even lawful delights; yea, prefer righteousness to that wherewith thou art delighted even lawfully.

What would ye? That there should be no lusts of evil and unlawful delights at all. What saint would not wish it? But he doth not gain his wish; as long as he liveth here this is not fulfilled. "For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that the things ye would"—that there should be no lusts at all of things unlawful in you—"ye cannot do^b?" What remains, then? "Walk in the Spirit, and"—seeing that ye cannot destroy the works of the

^a The Fathers make frequent reference to the immorality of the heathen stage in their days.

^b Gal. v. 17.

flesh—"fulfil not the lusts of the flesh." You ought by all means to wish to destroy, and end, and thoroughly extirpate them; but so long as they are in you, and there is another law in your members resisting the law of your mind, fulfil not the lusts of the flesh^c. For what would ye? that there should be no lusts of the flesh at all. They do not allow you to fulfil what you would; do not ye allow them to fulfil what they would. What would ye? That they should not exist at all. But they do exist. "The flesh lusteth against the Spirit;" let the Spirit lust against the flesh. "So that ye cannot do the things that ye would,"—that is, that there should not be these lusts of the flesh in you;—let not them either do that which they would,—that is, fulfil their work. If they do not give way to thee wholly, neither do thou give way to them. Let the battle first be equalized, that some day there may be victory.

For without doubt, my brethren, there shall be: let us believe, hope, love, some day there shall be victory at the dedication of the house which is in building now after the captivity. "For the last enemy, Death, shall be destroyed when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality^d."

Therefore, when thou hast begun to labour in thy struggle against the lusts of the flesh, walk thou in the Spirit, invoke the Spirit, seek the gift of God. And if the law in thy members resist the law of thy mind from this inferior part, that is, the flesh, and hold thee captive under the law of sin, this, too, shall be rectified; this, too, shall pass over unto the rights of victory. Only do thou cry out, only do thou invoke. "Men ought always to pray, and not to faint^e." Invoke, by all means, invoke aid. Whilst thou art yet speaking He saith, Lo, here am I. Afterwards give good heed and thou hearest Him saying to thy soul,

^c Rom. vii. 23.^d 1 Cor. xv. 54.^e St. Luke xviii. 1.

“I am thy salvation^f.” When the law of the flesh, then, shall have begun to resist the law of thy mind, and to lead thee captive in the law of sin, which is in thy members, in prayer say, in confession say, “Wretched man that I am^g!” For what else is man? If the Son of Man had not come, man had been lost. Cry out in thy straitness, “Who shall deliver me from the body of this death^h?” when the law in my members resisteth the law of my mind. “For I delight in the law of God after the inner manⁱ.” “Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?” If thou sayest this, believing, humbly, in greatest truth, the answer is made,—“The grace of God, through Jesus Christ our Lord.” Let us turn to the Lord^j.

THE GOSPEL.

ST. MATTHEW xv. 21—28.

“Jesus went thence, and departed,” &c.

Jesus went thence, and departed into the coasts of Tyre and Sidon. And, behold, a woman of Canaan came out of the same coasts, and cried unto Him, saying, Have mercy on me, O Lord, Thou Son of David; my daughter is grievously vexed with a devil.

How is it that while saying to His disciples, “Go not into the way of the Gentiles^k,” He Himself admitteth the woman of Canaan? We answer, first, that He was not Himself bound by what He enjoined upon His disciples; secondly, that not in order to preach did He depart into these coasts^l, as Mark intimated when He said that He would have no man know where He was, yet could not be hid.

For as His not hastening to the Gentiles first was

^f Ps. xxxv. 3. ^g Rom. vii. 24. ^h Ibid. ⁱ Rom. vii. 22.
^j St. Augustine. Ser. N. T. ^k St. Matt. x. 5. ^l St. Matt. vii. 24.

a part of the regular course of His proceeding, so to drive them away when coming to Him, would have been unworthy of His love to man; for if the fleeing ought to be pursued, much more ought the pursuing not to be avoided.

And see how worthy this woman was of the benefit, for, fearing and accounting herself unworthy, she durst not even come to Jerusalem. That she would have come there but for this, is evident both from her present earnestness and from her coming out of her own coasts.

Having thus come unto Him, she saith nothing else but, *Have mercy on me*, and by her cry brings about them many spectators. For, indeed, it was a pitiful spectacle to see a woman crying aloud in so great affliction, and that woman a mother, and entreating for a daughter, and for a daughter in such evil case; she not venturing to bring into the Master's sight her that was possessed, but leaving her at home, and herself making the entreaty.

And she tells her affliction only, and adds nothing more. Neither would she drag the Physician to her house like the nobleman, saying, "Come, and lay Thine hand upon her," and, "Come down ere my child die."

But having described both her calamity and the intensity of the disease, she pleads the Lord's mercy, and cries aloud, and she saith not, "Have mercy on my daughter," but, *Have mercy on me*. For she, indeed, is insensible of her disease, but it is I that suffer her innumerable woes; my disease hath consciousness of misery, my madness hath perception of itself.

But He answered her not a word.

What is this new and strange thing? The Jews in their perverseness He would lead to Himself, they blaspheme and He entreats them, they tempt Him and He dismisses them not; but to her—running unto

Him, and entreating and beseeching Him—to her who had been educated neither in the law nor in the prophets, and who was exhibiting so great reverence, to her He doth not vouchsafe so much as an answer.

Whom would not this have offended, seeing the fact so opposite to the report? For whereas they had heard that He went about the villages healing, now when this woman had come to Him, He utterly repels her; yet who would not have been moved by her affliction, and by the supplications she made for her daughter in such evil case? For not as one worthy, not as demanding a due, did she approach Him. But she entreated that she might find mercy, and merely gives a lamentable account of her affliction. Yet is she not counted worthy of so much as an answer^m.

And His disciples came and besought Him, saying, Send her away; for she crieth after us. But Christ saith, I am not sent but to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.

Out of these words arises a question. “If He was not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel, how came one from among the Gentiles into Christ’s fold? What is the meaning of the so deep economy of this mystery, that whereas the Lord knew the purpose of His coming, that He might have a Church in all nations,—He said that He was *not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel?*” We understand, then, by this, that it behoved Him to manifest His bodily presence, His birth, the exhibition of His miracles, and the power of His Resurrection, among that people: that so it had been ordained, so set forth from the beginning, so predicted, and so fulfilled; that Christ Jesus was to come to the nation of the Jews, to be seen and slain, and to gain from among them those whom He foreknew. For that people was not wholly condemned, but sifted. There was among them a great quantity of chaff, but there was also the hidden worth

^m St. Chrysostom.

of the grain; there was among them that which was to be burnt, there was among them also that where-with the barn was to be filled. For whence came the Apostles? Whence came Peter? Whence the rest?

He said, *I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel*, that to them He might exhibit the Presence of His Body; not that He might disregard and pass over the sheep which He had among the Gentiles.

For to the Gentiles He went not Himself, but sent His disciples. And in this was fulfilled what the Prophet said, "A people whom I have not known have served Me." See how deep, how clear, how express the prophecy is; a people whom I have not known, that is, to whom I have not exhibited My Presence, "have served Me." How? He goes on to say, "By the hearing of the ear they have obliged Me;" that is, they have believed, not by seeing, but by hearing. Therefore have the Gentiles the greater praise. For the Jews saw and slew Him, the Gentiles heard and believed.

Of this you have a very sacred figure in the Gospel also. A daughter of a ruler of the synagogue^a was really dead, and her father besought the Lord that He would go to her; he had left her sick, and in extreme danger. The Lord set out to visit and heal the sick; in the meantime it was announced that she was dead, and it was told the father, "Thy daughter is dead, trouble not the Master." But the Lord, who knew that He could raise the dead, did not deprive the despairing father of hope, and said unto him, "Fear not, only believe." So He set out to the maiden; and in the way a certain woman, who had suffered from an issue of blood, and in her lengthened illness had spent to no purpose all that she had upon physicians, pressed herself in, how she could, amongst the crowds. When she touched the border of His

^a St. Luke viii. 41, &c.

garment, she was made whole. And the Lord said, "Who touched Me?" The disciples, who knew not what had taken place, and saw that He was thronged by the multitudes, and that He was troubling Himself about one single woman who had touched Him gently, answered in astonishment, "The multitudes press Thee, and sayest Thou, 'Who touched Me?'" And He said, "Somebody hath touched Me." For the others press, she hath touched. The many then rudely press the Body of Christ, few touch it healthfully. "Somebody," saith He, "hath touched Me, for I perceive that virtue is gone out of Me." And when the woman saw that she was not hid, she fell down at His feet, and confessed what had taken place. After this He set out again, and arrived whither He was going, and raised to life the young daughter of the ruler of the synagogue, who was found to be dead.

This daughter of the ruler of the synagogue was a figure of the people of the Jews, for whose sake Christ had come, who said, *I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel*. But the woman who suffered from the issue of blood, figured the Church from among the Gentiles, to which Christ was not sent in His bodily presence. He was going to the former, He was intent on her recovery; meanwhile the latter runs to meet Him, touches His border as though He knew it not; that is, she is healed by Him who is in some sense absent. He saith, "Who touched Me?" as though He would say, I do not know this people, "A people whom I have not known hath served Me. Some one hath touched Me, for I perceive that virtue is gone out of Me; that is, that My Gospel hath gone out and filled the whole world." Now it is the border that is touched, a small and outside part of the garment. Consider the Apostles, as it were, the garment of Christ. Among them Paul was the border, that is, the last and least. For he said of himself that he was both; "I am the least

of the Apostles °." For he was called after them all, he believed after them all, he healed more than they all. The Lord was *not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel*. But because a people whom He had "not known" was also to serve Him, and to obey Him "in the hearing of the ear," He made mention of them, too, when He was among the others^p. For the same Lord said in a certain place, "Other sheep I have, which are not of this fold; them also must I bring, that there may be one fold and one shepherd."

Of these was this woman; therefore she was not refused, but only put off. *I am not sent, saith He, but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel*^q.

What, then, did the woman after she heard this? Was she silent? did she desist? did she relax in her earnestness? By no means. She was the more instant. Not so is it with us, but rather when we fail to obtain we desist, whereas this ought to make us the more urgent.

And yet who would not have been driven to perplexity by the word which was then spoken? Why, His silence were enough to drive her to despair, much more His answer.

Nevertheless the woman was not perplexed, but she made herself shameless with a goodly shamelessness. For whereas before this she had not ventured so much as to come in sight, (*for she crieth, it is said, after us,*) now when one might expect that she should rather depart farther off in utter despair, at this very time she comes nearer, and worships, saying, *Lord, help me*.

What, then, saith Christ? Not even with this is He satisfied, but He makes her perplexity yet greater, saying, *It is not meet to take the children's bread, and to cast it to the dogs*.

When He vouchsafed her a word, then He smote her more sharply than by His silence. And no longer

° 1 Cor. xv. 9.

^p St. John x. 16.

^q St. Augustine, Ser. N. T., xxvii.

doth He refer the cause to another, nor say, *I am not sent*, but the more urgent she makes her entreaty, so much the more doth He also urge His denial. And He calls the Jews no more *sheep* but *children*, and her a dog.

What, then, saith the woman? Out of His own very words she frames her plea. "Yea, though I be a dog," saith she, "I am not an alien."

Truth, Lord; yet the dogs eat of the crumbs which fall from their master's table.

With this intent did Christ put her off, for He knew that she would say this. For this cause did He deny the grant, that He might exhibit her lofty self-command. For if from the first He had not meant to give, He would not have given afterwards, nor would He have stopped her mouth again: but as He did in the case of the centurion, saying, "I will come and heal him^r," that we might learn the godly fear of that man, and might hear him say, "I am not worthy that thou shouldest come under my roof;" and as He did in the case of her that had the issue of blood, saying, "I perceive that virtue hath gone out of Me^r," that He might make her faith manifest; and as He did in the case of the Samaritan woman, that He might shew how not even when reprov'd she desists;—so also here He would not that so great virtue in the woman should be hidden. Not in insult, then, were His words spoken, but as calling her forth and revealing the treasure hid up in her.

And do thou, I pray thee, together with her faith see also her humility. For He had called the Jews children, but she was not satisfied with this, but called them *masters*, so far was she from grieving at the praises of others.

The dogs, saith she, eat of the crumbs which fall from their master's table.

Seest thou the woman's wisdom? how she did not

^r St. Matt. viii. 5, &c.

^r St. Luke viii. 46.

venture to say so much as a word in opposition, nor was she stung by the praise bestowed on others, nor was she indignant at reproach. Seest thou her constancy? He said, *It is not meet*: and she said, *Truth, Lord*. He called them *children*, but she *masters*; He used the name of a dog, but she added also the dog's act. Seest thou this woman's humility?

Hear the proud language of the Jews: "We be Abraham's seed, and were never in bondage to any man¹." And, "We be born of God." Not so this woman; rather she calls herself a dog, and them masters. And for this she became a child. What, then, saith Christ?

O woman, great is thy faith.

Yea, therefore, did He put her off that He might proclaim aloud this saying, that He might crown her.

Be it unto thee even as thou wilt.

Now what He saith is like this, "Thy faith, indeed, is able to effect even greater things than this; nevertheless, be it unto thee even as thou wilt."

This was akin to that Voice which said, "Let the heaven be, and it was²."

And her daughter was made whole from that very hour.

Seest thou how this woman contributed not a little to the healing of her daughter? Christ said not, "Let thy little daughter be made whole," but, *Great is thy faith: be it unto thee even as thou wilt*, in order to teach thee that the words were not used at random, nor were flattering words, but that great was the power of her faith.

The certain test, however, and demonstration thereof He left to the issue of events. Her daughter accordingly was straightway healed³.

¹ St. John viii. 33, 41.

² Gen. i.

³ St. Chrysostom.

THE THIRD SUNDAY IN LENT.

THE EPISTLE.

EPHESIANS v. 1 — 14.

“Be ye therefore followers of God,” &c.

Be ye therefore followers of God, as dear children ; and walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given Himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling savour.

Observe how Paul saith not simply that Christ died, as if He died of necessity, but that He gave Himself for us, as though to say, “Thy Master loved thee who wert an enemy, love thou thy friend.” And though thou canst not to the full love as Christ loved, yet so far as thou art able, imitate Him.

And behold the incitement,—*as dear children.* Not only in that ye have received good at His hand, but also in that ye are made His children, imitate Him.

But fornication, and all uncleanness, or covetousness, let it not be once named amongst you, as becometh saints ; neither filthiness, nor foolish-talking, nor jesting, which are not convenient ; but rather giving of thanks.

Let there not be one idle word, for from idle words we fall to wicked words. The present is no season for loose merriment, but rather for mourning, for tribulation, for lamentation, and dost thou play the jester ? What wrestler on entering the ring neglects the struggle with his adversary, and utters pleasantries ? The devil stands hard at hand ; he is “going about roaring^a” to catch thee ; he is moving everything and turning everything against thy life ; he is scheming

^a 1 Pet. v. 8.

to force thee from thy retreat; he is grinding his teeth and roaring, he is breathing fire against thy salvation; and art thou sitting down and uttering pleasantries, and talking folly, and speaking things *which are not convenient*? Full nobly, indeed, wilt thou be able to survive the contest. Are we in sport, beloved? wouldst thou know the life of the saints? Listen to what Paul saith. "By the space of three months I ceased not to warn every one of you night and day with tears^b." Hearken again to what he saith to the Corinthians: "Out of much affliction and anguish of heart I wrote unto you with many tears^c." And hearken again to what he says elsewhere, desiring every day, as one might say, to depart out of the world: "For we that are in this tabernacle do groan^d;" and art thou laughing and jesting? It is war-time, and art thou handling the dancer's instruments? Look at the countenances of men in battle, their dark and concentrated mien, their brow terrible and full of awe. Mark the stern eye, the heart eager and throbbing, the collected spirit, and intense anxiety. All is order, all is discipline, all is silence in the camp. They speak not, I do not say an impertinent word, but they utter not a single sound. Now if they who have visible enemies, and who are in no wise injured by words, observe so deep a silence, dost thou who hast thy warfare, the chief of thy warfare in words, dost thou leave this part unguarded and exposed? Dost thou not know that it is here we are most beset by snares? Art thou amusing and enjoying thyself, and speaking pleasantries, and raising a laugh, and regarding this matter as a mere nothing? How many perjuries, how many injuries, how many filthy speeches have had their beginning in trifling words.

For this ye know, that no whoremonger, nor unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ, and of God. Let

^b Acts xx. 31.^c 2 Cor. ii. 4.^d 2 Cor. v. 4.

no man deceive you with vain words : for because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience.

There are some who say that the words, "the covetous man is an idolater," are hyperbolic. However, the statement is not hyperbolic, it is true. How, and in what way? Because the covetous man apostatizes from God, just as the idolater does. And lest you should imagine this to be a bare assertion, there is a declaration of Christ which saith, "Ye cannot serve God and mammon^e." They who serve mammon have thrown themselves out of the service of God; and they who have thus denied His sovereignty, and serve lifeless gold, it is plain that they are idolaters. "But I never made an idol," a man will say, "nor set up an altar, nor sacrificed sheep, nor poured libations of wine; no, I have come to church, and lifted up my hands to the Only-begotten Son of God; I partake of the mysteries, I communicate in prayer, and in all the duties of a Christian. How then, am I a worshipper of idols?" Yes. And this is the very thing which is the most astonishing of all, that when thou hast had experience, and hast tasted the loving kindness of God, and hast seen "that the Lord is gracious^f," thou shouldest give up Him who is gracious, and take to thyself a cruel tyrant, and shouldest pretend to be serving God, whilst in reality thou hast submitted thyself to the hard and galling yoke of covetousness. Thou hast not yet told me of thine own duty done, but only of thy Maker's gifts to thee.

There were, it appears, in the time of our forefathers also, some who did the works of the false prophets mentioned by Ezekiel^g, who polluted God before His people for a handful of barley; slaying the souls that should not die, and saving the souls alive that should not live, by their lying to His people; strengthening the hands of the wicked by promising him

^e St. Matt. vi. 24.

^f Ps. xxxiv. 8.

^g Ezek. xiii. 19, 22.

life. And this thing, methinks, is done by some even at this day. It is done, I mean, if, when we say that he who calleth his brother fool shall depart into hell fire, another says, "What? is he that calls his brother a fool to depart into hell fire? Impossible!" Again, if when we say that the covetous man is an idolater, they make abatements, calling the expression hyperbolical. For in this manner they underrate and explain away all the commandments of God. It was in allusion to such as these, then, that the blessed Paul, when he said, *For this ye know, that no whoremonger, nor unclean person, nor covetous man who is an idolater, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ, and of God, added, let no man deceive you with vain words: for because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience.* Now vain words are those which for a while are gratifying, but which are not borne out by facts because the whole is a deception.

Be ye not, therefore, partakers with them.

Observe how wisely he urges them forward; first by the example of Christ, that ye love one another, and do injury to no man; then, on the other hand, by the thought of punishment and hell-fire.

For ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord. This is what he says also in the Epistle to the Romans: "What fruit therefore had ye then in those things whereof ye are now ashamed^b?" reminding them of their former wickedness. "Thinking what ye once were, and what ye are now become, do not fall back into your former wickedness, nor do 'despite to the grace of Godⁱ.'" *Be ye not partakers with them. Ye were sometime darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord.* Ye were sometime worthy of the same punishments as they, but now are so no more. *Walk therefore as children of light.*

What is meant by *children of light* he shews afterwards;

^b Rom. vi. 21.

ⁱ Heb. x. 29.

For the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness, and righteousness, and truth; proving what is acceptable unto the Lord.

In all goodness, he says; this is opposed to the angry and the bitter: *and righteousness*; this to the covetous: *and truth*; this to false pleasure. *The fruit of the Spirit*, he says, is not those things which were mentioned before, but these, their very opposites. And he says *in all*, that is, the fruit of the Spirit ought to be evidenced in everything.

And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them.

Hearken, I entreat you all. A man commits a robbery, and dost thou not reprove him? Thou art afraid of being hated even if thou dost convict him justly. Convict him; incur enmity for the sake of that love which thou owest to Christ, for the sake of that love which thou owest to thy brother. Arrest him as he is on his road to the pit of destruction. To admit such a one to our table, to treat him with civil words, with courteous salutations, and so on, this is no proof of friendship. No, in such a case, to convict, to reprove, is the boon we must bestow on our friend, that we may rescue his soul from the wrath of God. When we see him lying prostrate in the furnace of wickedness, let us raise him up. But, it may be said, "It is of no use—the man is incorrigible." Nevertheless, do thou thy duty, and then thou art blameless thyself before God. Hide not thy talent, it is for this that thou hast speech, it is for this that thou hast a mouth and a tongue; it is dumb and reasonless creatures only that take no account of others, and have no care for their fellows. But dost thou, who callest God, Father, and thy neighbour, brother, when thou seest him committing wicked deeds, dost thou prefer his goodwill to his well-being? No, do not so, I entreat you. There is not so certain an evidence of friendship as never to overlook the sins of our brethren. Dost thou see them

at enmity? reconcile them. Dost thou see them set on unlawful gain? check them. It is not on them, it is on thyself thou art conferring the chief benefit. It is for this we are friends, that we may be of use one to another. A man will listen in a different spirit to a friend, and to a stranger. An indifferent person he will perhaps regard with suspicion, and so in like manner will he regard an instructor, but not so a friend.

For it is a shame even to speak of such things as are done of them in secret, but all things which are reprov'd are made manifest by the light: for whatsoever doth make manifest is light.

He means here to say that some sins in this world are done in secret, some openly; but in the other world it shall not be thus. Now there is no one who is not conscious to himself of some sin. This is why he says that *all things which are reprov'd are made manifest by the light.*

I entreat you, therefore, be ye never backward to reprove, nor be ye displeased at being reprov'd. For so long, indeed, as anything is carried on in the dark, it is carried on with greater security; but when there are many to witness what is done, it is brought to light. By all means, then, let us do all we can to chase away the deadness which is in our brethren, to scatter the darkness, and to attract to us the "Sun of righteousness." For if there be many shining lights, the path of virtue will be easy to themselves, and they which are in darkness will be more easily detected while the light is held forth and puts the darkness to flight; whereas, if the reverse be the case, there is fear lest as the thick mist of darkness and of sin overpowers the light, those shining lights themselves should be extinguished. Let us, then, be disposed thus to help each other, that we, one and all, may offer up praise and glory to the God of loving-kindness, by the grace and loving-kindness of Christ.

Wherefore he saith, Awake, thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light.

By the sleeper and the dead Paul means the man that is in sin, for he both exhales noisome odours like the dead, and is inactive like one that is asleep, and like him he sees nothing, but is dreaming and forming fancies and illusions. Depart from sin and thou shalt be able to behold Christ. For "he that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh unto the light^k;" he therefore that doeth it not, cometh to the light.

Now he is not saying this with reference to the unbelievers only, for many of the faithful no less than unbelievers hold fast by wickedness; nay, some far more. Therefore to these also it is necessary to exclaim, *Awake, thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light.* To them it is fitting to say this also, "God is not the God of the dead, but of the living^l." If, then, He is not the God of the dead, let us have our place among the living.

As there is a death of the body, so is there also a death of the soul. "The soul that sinneth," saith the Prophet, "it shall die^m." The death of the soul, however, is not like the death of the body, it is far more terrible. For bodily death, separating soul and body the one from the other, releases the one from many anxieties and toils, and transmits the other into a manifest abode. Then, when after a time the body has been dissolved and crumbled away, it is again gathered together in incorruption, and receives back its own proper soul. Such, we see, is bodily death. But that of the soul is awful and terrific. For this death, when dissolution takes place, does not let it pass away as the body does, but binds it down again to an imperishable body, and consigns it to the unquenchable fire. This, then, is the death of the soul. And as there is a death of the soul, so is there also a slaughter of the soul. What is the slaughter of the

^k St. John iii. 20.

^l St. Matt. xxii. 32.

^m Ezek. xviii. 4.

body? It is the being turned into a corpse, the being stripped of the energy derived from the soul. What is the slaughter of the soul? It is the being made a corpse also. And how is the soul made a corpse? As the body becomes a corpse when the soul leaves it destitute of its own vital energy, so does the soul become a corpse when the Holy Spirit leaves it destitute of His spiritual energy^a.

THE GOSPEL.

ST. LUKE xi. 14—28.

“Jesus was casting out a devil.”

Jesus was casting out a devil, and it was dumb. And it came to pass, when the devil was gone out, the dumb spake; and the people wondered. But some of them said, He casteth out devils through Beelzebub, the chief of the devils. And others, tempting Him, sought of Him a sign from heaven.

The people had before now accused Him of casting out devils by Beelzebub^o, but whereas He did not then rebuke them, rather leading them by His more numerous miracles to recognise His power, and by His teaching to perceive His majesty,—now, since they continued perversely saying the same thing, He proceeds to rebuke them, shewing His Godhead, first, by making known their secret thoughts, and secondly, by the very act of casting out the devils with ease.

And indeed the accusation was very shameless, yet Christ did not despise those who made it, but defended Himself with the forbearance proper to Him; teaching us to be meek to our enemies; and though they accuse us of such things as we are neither conscious of, nor such as are in themselves at all probable, yet not to

^a St. Chrysostom.

^o Chrys. Hom. 41; St. Matt. xii. 24.

be disturbed nor troubled, but with all long-suffering to render an account of our actions. This, then, He did on that occasion, giving the strongest proof that their accusation was false. For it was not the part of a demoniac to shew so much meekness, it was not the part of a demoniac to know men's secret thoughts.

*But He, knowing their thoughts, said,—*because their suspicion was utterly without reason, and because of the fear of the multitude, the Pharisees durst not publicly make these charges, but were turning them in their minds.

But He, to shew them that He knew this also, doth not set down the accusation, and expose their wickedness; but He gives the refutation, leaving those that had brought the accusation to be convicted by their own consciences. For on one thing only was He bent, not on exposing the sinners, but on doing them good.

How, then, doth He plead with them?

Every kingdom, saith He, divided against itself is brought to desolation; and a house divided against a house falleth.

What is there more powerful on earth than a kingdom? Nothing. Nevertheless it perishes if in disunion, and if in this case thou wouldst throw the blame on the great burden of the affairs thereof, as breaking down by their own weight, what wouldest thou say of a city, and what of a house? Thus, whether it be a small thing or a great, if in dissension within itself it perishes. If, then, I, having a devil, do by him cast out the devils, there is dissension and fighting among the devils, and they take their stand one against another. But if they stand one against another, their strength is wasted and destroyed. “If Satan cast out Satan, he is divided against himself^p;” and if he be divided, he is become weak and is ruined; and if he be ruined, how can he cast out another?

Seest thou how great is the absurdity of the accusation? how great the folly, the inconsistency?

^p St. Matt. xii. 26.

This, then, being the first refutation, the second relates to the disciples.

If I by Beelzebub cast out devils, by whom do your sons cast them out?

See here, too, His gentleness. For He said not My disciples, but *your sons*; to the end that if indeed they were disposed to return to a better mind, they might hence derive a powerful motive; but if they were uncandid, and continued in the same course, they would thenceforth be deprived of all excuse.

He asks, "By whom do they cast them out?" They were already doing this, having received authority from Him, and the Pharisees brought no charge against them, their quarrel being not with the action but with the Person. As, then, it was His will to shew that their sayings arose only from envy against Him, He brings forward the Apostles. If I so cast them out, much more those who have received their authority from Me; nevertheless, no such accusation have ye brought against them. How, then, while acquitting them, bring ye these charges against Me, the Author of their doings? This, however, will not free you from punishment, rather it will condemn you the more. Therefore He adds,

They shall be your judges.

For when men from among yourselves, and men practised in these things, both believe Me and obey, it is clear that they will condemn those who are against Me in deed and in word.

But if I by the finger of God cast out devils, no doubt the kingdom of God is come upon you.

By this He implies that to cast out devils is a work of the greatest power, and not of any ordinary grace. And He intends that drawing the inference they should say, If this be so, then the Son of God is come.

And what means He by *the kingdom*? His own coming. This is that time which the prophets long ago foretold: and the sign of this Advent which was

celebrated by them is even the working of these miracles by Divine power. For the fact that they are wrought ye yourselves know, and that they are wrought by Divine power the deeds themselves declare.

Having thus given His second refutation, He adds a third, saying,

When a strong man armed keepeth his palace, his goods are in peace; but when a stronger than he shall come upon him, and overcome him, he taketh from him all his armour wherein he trusted, and divideth his spoils.

That Satan cannot possibly cast out Satan has been made evident already, but that neither can he be in any way cast out except by one who first gets the mastery over him, this also is acknowledged by all men.

What, then, do these words establish? That which went before and with more abundant proof. "Why am I so far," saith He, "from using the devil as an ally that I make war upon him and overcome him, and an infallible proof thereof is the plundering of his goods."

See how the contrary is proved of that which they were attempting to establish. For whereas they wished to shew that not by His own power doth He cast out evils, He shews that not only the devils but even their chief leader is held by Him bound^a, and that He prevailed over him by His own power. And this is proved by what was done. For if he be the Prince, and they his subjects, how, except he were worsted, and made to bow down, could they have been spoiled?

And here His saying seems to me to be likewise prophecy. For not only, I suppose, are the evil spirits the *goods* of the devil, but the men also who are doing his work. Therefore He said these things to declare that not only doth He cast out devils, but will also drive away all error from the world, and will put down the sorceries of Satan, and make vain all his arts. And He calls the devil *strong*, not because he is

^a St. Matthew.

so by nature, God forbid ; but as declaring his former tyranny, which arose from our carelessness.

He that is not with Me is against Me : and he that gathereth not with Me scattereth.

This is a fourth answer, as if He said, "I desire to bring men to God, but Satan desires to drive them from Him. How, then, should he who does not work with Me, but scatters what is Mine, become so united with Me, as with Me to cast out devils ? And if he who does not work with Me is My adversary, how much more he who opposes Me ?" It seems to me that Christ here refers also under a figure to the Jews, ranging them with the devil. For they also acted against Him, and scattered those whom He gathered together.

When the unclean spirit is gone out of a man, he walketh through dry places, seeking rest ; and finding none, he saith, I will return unto my house whence I came out. And when he cometh, he findeth it swept and garnished. Then goeth he, and taketh to him seven other spirits more wicked than himself, and they enter in, and dwell there ; and the last state of that man is worse than the first.

As the possessed, when delivered from their infirmity, should they be at all remiss, would bring back their calamity more grievous than ever : even so is it with you. For ye were before possessed by a devil, when ye were worshipping idols, and were sacrificing your sons to the devils, giving proof of great madness ; nevertheless I forsook you not, but cast out that devil by the prophets ; and now in My own Person I am come, willing to cleanse you more entirely. Since, then, ye will not repent, but have wrecked yourselves in greater wickedness, (for to kill the prophets was not so great and grievous a crime as to slay the Lord of the Prophets,) therefore shall your sufferings be more grievous now than then ; more grievous, that is to say, shall be your sufferings from Vespasian and Titus hereafter, than were your former sufferings in

Egypt and in Babylon. And not only this doth the illustration declare, but also that they should be utterly destitute of virtue, and more assailable by the power of the devils than before. For then, although they sinned, yet were there some among them that acted uprightly, and God's providence was present with them, and the grace of the Holy Spirit, tending, correcting, fulfilling all its part; but now of this guardianship they are deprived; so that there is now a greater lack of virtue, and their sorrows are more intense, and the tyranny of the evil spirits more terrible.

And it came to pass, as He spake these things, a certain woman of the company lift up her voice, and said unto Him, Blessed is the womb that bare Thee, and the paps which Thou hast sucked. But He said, Yea rather, blessed are they that hear the Word of God, and keep it.

In this answer He sought not to disown His Mother, but to shew that His birth would have profited her nothing, had she not been really fruitful in works and faith. But if it profited Mary nothing that Christ derived His birth from her, without the inward virtue of her heart, much less will it avail us to have a virtuous father, or brother, or son, while we ourselves are strangers to virtue.

Seest thou how, on every occasion, He denies not the affinity by nature, but adds that by virtue? So, too, His forerunner, in saying, "O generation of vipers, think not to say, We have Abraham to our father^r," means not that they were not naturally of Abraham, but that it profits them nothing to be of Abraham, unless they were like Abraham; which also Christ declared when He said, "If ye were Abraham's children, ye would do the works of Abraham^s;" not depriving them of this kindred according to the flesh, but teaching them to seek after that kindred which is greater than this, and has in it more reality^t.

^r St. Matt. iii. 7, 9.

^s St. John viii. 39.

^t St. Chrysostom, Cat. Aur., Luke, and Hom. in Matt.

THE FOURTH SUNDAY IN LENT.

THE EPISTLE.

GAL. iv. 21—31.

“Tell me, ye that desire to be under the Law,” &c.

Tell me, ye that desire to be under the Law, do ye not hear the Law?

It is the Book of Creation [or Genesis] which Paul here calls the Law; which name he also often gives to the whole Old Testament. He says rightly, *ye that desire*, for this belonged not to the order of events, but to their own unseasonable particularity.

For it is written, that Abraham had two sons, the one by a bond-maid, the other by a free-woman.

Having previously shewn that the Galatians were sons of Abraham, now, in that the patriarch's sons were not of equal dignity, one being by a bond-woman, the other by a free-woman, he shews that they [the Galatians] were not sons only, but sons in the same sense as he that was free-born and noble.

But he who was of the bond-woman was born after the flesh; but he of the free-woman was by promise.

What is the meaning of *after the flesh*? Having said that faith united us to Abraham, and it having seemed incredible to his hearers that those who were not begotten by Abraham should be called his sons, he proved that this paradox had actually happened long ago. For that Isaac, born not according to the order of nature, nor the law of marriage, nor the power of the flesh, was yet truly his own son. He was the issue of bodies that were dead. His conception was not by the flesh, nor his birth by the seed, for the womb was dead both through age and barrenness; but the Word of God

fashioned him. Not so in the case of the bond-man. He came of the necessity of nature, and after the manner of marriage. Nevertheless, he that was not according to the flesh was more honourable than he that was born after the flesh. "Therefore," saith Paul, "let it not disturb you, that ye are not born after the flesh; for, from the very reason that ye are not so born, are ye most of all Abraham's kindred. The being born after the flesh renders one not more honourable, but less so, for a birth not after the flesh is more marvellous and more spiritual; and this is plain from the case of those who were born in old time. Thus Ishmael, who was born according to the flesh, was not only a bond-man, but was cast out of his father's house. But Isaac, who was born according to the promise, being a true son and free, was lord of all."

Which things are an allegory.

Contrary to usage, he calls a type an allegory. His meaning is as follows. This history not only declares that which appears on the face of it, but announces somewhat more, whence it is called an allegory. And what hath it announced? No less than all things now present.

For these are the two covenants; the one from the mount Sinai, which gendereth to bondage, which is Agar.

These, who? The mothers of those children, Sarah and Agar. And what are the two covenants? They are the two laws.

For this Agar is mount Sinai in Arabia.

The bond-woman was called Agar, and "Agar" is the word for mount Sinai in the language of that country. So that it is necessary that all who are born of the old covenant should be bond-men, for that mountain where the old covenant was delivered hath a name in common with the bond-woman.

And answereth to Jerusalem which now is, and is in bondage with her children.

What follows from hence? Not only that she was in

bondage and brought forth bond-men, but that this covenant is also in bondage, whereof the bond-woman was a type.

Now where is the type Sarah?

But Jerusalem which is above is free.

Those, therefore, who are born of her are not bond-men. Thus the type of the Jerusalem below was Agar; but the type of the Jerusalem above is the Church. Nevertheless Paul is not content with these types, but having said that Jerusalem, which is above, is *the mother of us all*, and having given that name to the Church, he cites the testimony thereto of the prophet Isaiah^a.

Rejoice, thou barren that bearest not; break forth and cry, thou that travailest not: for the desolate hath many more children than she which hath an husband.

Who is this which before was barren and desolate? Clearly it is the Church of the Gentiles, that was before deprived of the knowledge of God. Who is *she which hath an husband*? Plainly the synagogue. Yet the barren woman surpassed her in the number of her children, for the other embraces one nation, but the children of the Church have filled the country of the Greeks and of the Barbarians, the earth and sea, the whole habitable world. Observe how Sarah by acts, and the prophet by words, have described the events about to befall us. Observe, too, that she whom Isaiah called barren, Paul hath proved to have many children, which also happened typically in the case of Sarah. For she, too, though barren, became the mother of a numerous progeny. This, however, does not suffice Paul, but he carefully follows out the mode whereby the barren woman became a mother, that in this particular likewise the type might harmonize with the truth. Wherefore he adds,

Now we, brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of promise.

^a Isa. liv. 1.

It is not merely that the Church was barren like Sarah, or became a mother of many children like her, but she bore them in the way Sarah did. As it was not nature but the promise of God which rendered Sarah a mother (for He who said, "At the time appointed I will return unto thee, and Sarah shall have a son^b," the same entered into the womb and formed the babe); so also in our regeneration it is not nature, but the words of God spoken by the priest (the faithful know them), which in the bath of water as in the womb form and regenerate him who is baptized.

Wherefore, if we are sons of the barren woman, then are we free. But what kind of freedom, it might be objected, is this, when the Jews seize and scourge the believers, and those who have this pretence of liberty are persecuted? For these things then occurred, in the persecution of the faithful. Neither let this disturb you, he replies, this also is anticipated in the type, for Isaac, who was free, was persecuted by Ishmael the bond-man. Wherefore he adds,

But as then he that was born after the flesh persecuted him that was born after the Spirit; even so it is now.

What! does all this consolation consist in shewing that free-men are persecuted by bond-men? By no means. He says, I do not stop here, listen to what follows, and then if you be not pusillanimous under persecution, you will be sufficiently comforted. And what is it that follows? *Cast out the bond-woman and her son; for the son of the bond-woman shall not be heir with the son of the free-woman.* Behold the reward of tyranny for a season, and of recklessness out of season! The son is cast out of his father's house, and becomes, together with his mother, an exile and a wanderer. And consider, too, the wisdom of the remark. For he says, not that he was cast forth merely because he persecuted, but that he should not be heir. For this

^b Gen. xviii. 14.

punishment was not exacted from him on account of his temporary persecution (for that would have been of little moment and nothing to the point), but he was not suffered to participate in the inheritance provided for the son. And this proves that, putting the persecution aside, this very thing had been typified from the beginning, and did not originate in the persecution, but in the purpose of God. Nor does he say, the son of Abraham shall not be the heir, but *the son of the bond-woman*, distinguishing him by his inferior descent. Now Sarah was barren, and so was the Gentile Church. Observe how the type is preserved in every particular; as the former, through all the bygone years, conceived not, and at last became a mother; so the latter, when the fulness of time is come, brings forth. This the prophets have proclaimed, saying, "Rejoice, thou barren that bearest not, break forth and cry, thou that travailest not, for the desolate hath many more children than she which hath an husband^c." And hereby they intend the Church. For she knew not God, but as soon as she knew Him, she surpassed the fruitful synagogue.

So then, brethren, we are not children of the bond-woman, but of the free.

How, then, can it be otherwise than absurd, for those who had been set apart and gifted with freedom so long ago, willingly to subject themselves to the yoke of bondage^d?

^c Isa. liv. 1.

^d St. Chrysostom.

THE GOSPEL.

ST. JOHN vi. 1—14.

“Jesus went over the sea of Galilee,” &c.

Jesus went over the sea of Galilee, which is the sea of Tiberias. And a great multitude followed Him, because they saw His miracles which He did on them that were diseased. And Jesus went up into a mountain, and there He sat with His disciples.

Because they saw His miracles. This betokeneth not a wise state of mind; they had enjoyed His teaching, and were still more attracted by the miracles, which was a sign of the grosser state. For miracles, it is said, are not for believers, but for unbelievers. The people described by Matthew acted not thus, but they all “were astonished at His doctrine, because He taught as one having authority.”

And why doth He occupy the mountain now, and sit there with His disciples? Because of the miracle which was about to take place. And that only the disciples went up with Him, was a charge against the multitude which followed Him not. But not for this alone did He go up into the mountain, but also to teach us ever to rest at intervals from the tumult and confusion of common life. For solitude is meet for the study of wisdom. And often doth He go up alone into a mountain and spend the night there, and pray, to teach us that the man who will come most near to God, must be free from all disturbance, and must seek times and places clear of confusion.

And the Passover, a feast of the Jews, was nigh.

Why, then, doth He not go up unto the Feast, but, when all are pressing to Jerusalem, He goeth into Galilee, and not Himself alone, but He taketh His disciples with Him, and proceedeth thence to Caper-

naum? Because henceforth He was quietly annulling the Law, taking occasion from the wickedness of the Jews.

When Jesus then lift up His eyes, and saw a great company come unto Him, He saith unto Philip, Whence shall we buy bread, that these may eat?

Wherefore doth He ask *Philip*? He knew which of His disciples most needed instruction; for this is he who afterwards said, "Shew us the Father, and it sufficeth us," and on this account Jesus was beforehand bringing him into a proper state. For had the miracle simply been performed, the marvel would not have seemed so great, but now He beforehand constraineth Philip to confess the want which there is, that, knowing the present state of things, he might the more exactly know the greatness of the miracle about to take place. Wherefore He saith, *Whence shall we buy bread, that these may eat?*

After this manner spake He in the Old Testament to Moses, for He wrought not the sign until He had asked him, "What is that in thine hand?" And because things which come to pass unexpectedly and suddenly are wont to make us forget the former things, therefore He drew him into a confession of the present circumstances, in order that afterwards, when the wonder should have come upon him, he might not forget that which himself had spoken, and might thus learn by comparison how great was the miracle wrought.

Thus, then, it is in this instance; for Philip being asked, replied,

Two hundred pennyworth of bread is not sufficient for them, that every one of them may take a little.

And this He said to prove him; for He Himself knew what He would do.

What meaneth *to prove him*? Did not He know what would be said by Philip? We may not say that.

¹ St. John xiv. 8.

² Exod. iv. 2.

then, is the meaning? We may discover it in the Old Testament, where it is written, "And it came to pass after these things, that God did tempt Abraham, and said unto him, Take now thy son, thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest^h." Yet it doth not appear that He waited to see the end of the trial, whether Abraham would obey or not; (how could He, who knoweth all things before they come into existence?) but the words in both cases are spoken after the manner of men. For as when the Psalmist saith "He searcheth the hearts of menⁱ," he meaneth a search of ignorance, but of exact knowledge; just as when the Evangelist saith that He proved Philip, he meaneth that He knew exactly. Perhaps, too, as He once made Abraham more approved, so did He with this man, bringing him by this question to exact knowledge of the miracle. The evangelist, therefore, that thou mayest not halt at the feebleness of expression, addeth, *He Himself knew what He do.*

of His disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, who brought him to Him, There is a lad here, which hath five barley-loaves and two small fishes: but what are they among so many?

Andrew is more high-minded than Philip, yet had not attained to perfection. Yet I do not think he without an object, but as having heard the words of the prophets; and how Elisha wrought with the loaves; on this account he mounted to a certain height, but could not attain the summit. He shows great weakness when he addeth, *What among so many?* He supposed that the *Worker* of the miracle would make less out of less, and more out of more. But this was not the case; for it was not to Him to cause bread to come forth from less, since He needed no subject-matter. Nor that the creation might not seem foreign to Him.

Gen. xxii. 1, 2.

ⁱ Ps. vii. 10.

to His wisdom, as afterwards slanderers and those affected with the disease of Marcion^k said, He used the creation itself as a groundwork for His marvels^l.

And Jesus said, Make the men sit down. Now there was much grass in the place. So the men sat down, in number about five thousand. And Jesus took the loaves, and when He had given thanks He distributed to the disciples, and the disciples to them that were set down; and likewise of the fishes as much as they would.

When both the disciples had owned themselves at a loss, then He wrought the miracle; for then they profited the more, having first confessed the difficulty, that when it should be done away, they might understand the power of God.

And because a miracle was about to be wrought which had before been performed by the prophets (although not in an equal degree), and because He would work it after first giving thanks, therefore, lest they should fall into any suspicion of weakness on His part, observe how, by the very manner of His working, He entirely raiseth their thoughts of it, and, lest they should fall into any suspicion of weakness on His part, sheweth them the difference between Himself and others. For when the loaves had not yet appeared, He—in order that thou mayest learn that things which

^k The Marcionites held that the power which maintains the universe is a power opposed to the true God, i.e. that a bad God was author of the world and the Law, a good God author of the Gospel and Redeemer of the world.

^l "Although the Lord is able to furnish wine to the guests (St. John ii.), and to satisfy the hungry with food, without having any material to act upon among the creatures, yet He did not so, but rather He took such loaves as come of the earth, and gave thanks; and again, He made water wine, and so satisfied those who were set down, and gave drink to those who had been invited to the marriage, signifying that God, who made the earth, and commanded it to bear fruit, and established the waters, and poured forth the fountains, He in the last times, by His Son, bestoweth on the human race the blessing of meat and the grace of drink:—the Incomprehensible by One who can be comprehended, and the Invisible by One who can be seen: for He is not without the Father, but abideth in His bosom."
—*St. Irenæus against Heresies*, bk. iii. 11, § 4.

are not, are to Him as though they were (as Paul saith, "Who calleth those things that be not as though they were"^m)—He commanded them, as if the table were prepared and ready, straightway to sit down; by this rousing the minds of His disciples; and because they had profited by the previous questioning, they immediately obeyed, and were not confounded, nor asked, How is this? Why dost Thou bid us sit down, when there is nothing before us? The same men who at first disbelieved, so much as to say, *Whence shall we buy bread*, began so far to believe, even before they saw the miracle, that they readily made the multitudes to sit down.

But why, when He was about to restore the paralytic, did He not pray, nor when He was raising the dead, or bridling the sea, and yet prayeth here over the loaves? He prayeth here to shew that when we begin our meals, we ought to give thanks unto God. And He prayed not there that thou mightest learn that, working these things by His own authority, it was through condescension that He acted thus, and not as having need to pray; for were this the case, much more would He have done so in the greater things than in the lesser. Besides, a great multitude was present, and it was necessary that they should be persuaded that He had come according to the will of God. Wherefore, when He worketh miracles in the absence of witnesses, He doeth not this, but He doeth it when He worketh them in the presence of many; in order to persuade them that He is no enemy of God, no adversary of Him who hath begotten Him, He removeth the suspicion by thanksgiving.

When they were filled, He said unto His disciples, Gather up the fragments that remain, that nothing be lost. Therefore they gathered them together, and filled twelve baskets with the fragments of the five barley-loaves, which remained over and above unto them that had eaten.

^m Rom. iv. 17.

This was not a superfluous show, but in order that the matter might not be deemed a mere illusion. And for this reason also He created from matter already subsisting. But why gave He not the bread to the multitudes to bear, but to His disciples only? Because He was most desirous to instruct those who were to instruct the world. The multitude would not as yet reap any great fruit from the miracles (at least they straightway forget this one, and asked for another), while the disciples would gain much profit. What took place was moreover no ordinary condemnation of Judas, who bore a basket. And that these things were done for their instruction, is plain from what is said afterwards, when He reminded them, saying, Do ye not yet understand how many baskets ye took up^a? And for the same reason it was that the baskets of fragments were equal in number to the disciples. Afterwards, when they were instructed, they took not up so many baskets, but only seven.

Then those men, when they had seen the miracle that Jesus did, said, This is of a truth that Prophet that should come into the world.

Oh, excess of gluttony! He had done ten thousand things more admirable than this, but nowhere did they make this confession, save when they had been filled! Yet it is evident even hence that they expected some remarkable prophet, for those others had said to John, "Art thou that Prophet^o;" while these say, *This is that Prophet^p.*

^a St. Mark viii. 19—21.

^o St. Luke vii. 19.

^p St. Chrysostom.

THE FIFTH SUNDAY IN LENT.

THE EPISTLE.

HEB. ix. 11—15.

“ Christ being come an High Priest,” &c.

Christ being come an High Priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands; that is to say, not of this building; neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by His own blood He entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us. For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh: how much more shall the blood of Christ, who, through the eternal Spirit, offered Himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God? And for this cause He is the Mediator of the New Testament, that by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first Testament, they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance.

That Christ is, and how salvation hath come to us through Him, herein is the plan and the means. The grace of God was given at first to the Jews; through this they were righteous in old time, and their ancestors were obedient to the ordinances of religion. Hence their kingdom was uplifted in renown, and their race became many and abounded. But becoming negligent in the after-time, unruly and proud, and puffed up in a confidence in their fathers, they slight the divine commandments, and have forfeited thereby that grace which had been given them. How unhal-

lowed their life became, with what guilty offences they violated their religion, themselves give witness; silent with the tongue, but confessing by the event. Dispersed and straggling, they roam; exiles from their soil and clime, they are tossed among the homes of strangers. God moreover had aforetime declared, that in the decline of ages, when the end of this world came nigh, He from every nation, people, and place, would gather together to Him worshippers much more faithful and of a better obedience, who should have enjoyment of that loving mercy, as a divine gift, which the Jews, having received, had lost through neglect of His ordinances. Dispenser, then, and Master of this loving mercy, of this grace and discipline, the Word and Son of God is sent, who by all the prophets hitherto was fore-announced, as the Enlightener and Teacher of the human race. He is the Virtue of God, He is His Reason, He is His Wisdom and Glory. He enters into the Virgin, and puts on flesh, being the Holy Spirit^a. God is made one with man. He is our God, He is the Christ, who as Mediator between two, puts on man^b that He may lead him to the Father. Christ willed to become what man is, in order that man may have power to become what Christ is. The Jews also knew that Christ should come. Continually, by the voice of the prophets, were the tidings of Him renewed to them; but with a signification of two advents of Him, one which should be occupied in the dealings and example of man, the other which should reveal Him as God;

^a Spiritus Sanctus.—It is not unfrequent with the earlier Fathers to use the title *Spiritus Sanctus* for our Lord's Divine nature; after the texts which speak of His being "the Son of God according to the Spirit of holiness," and having offered Himself up to God through the Eternal Spirit.

^b Hominem induit, i.e. human nature. Thus the orthodox doctrine differs from Nestorianism, which holds that the Son of God assumed a man, that is, a human person; a notion which, involving a double personality, divine and human, issued in a sort of (what is now called) Socinianism; as if Jesus Christ were a man inhabited or inspired by God, not numerically one with Him, or God in human nature.

though, not understanding His first advent, which went first and was hidden in His Passion, they believe in one advent only, that which will be manifested in His power. That the people of the Jews could not understand this, was the due reward of their crimes. Such blindness had they earned as to wisdom and knowledge, that, as being unworthy of life, they had the Life before their eyes, yet could not see it.

Therefore, when Christ Jesus, as had been before told by the prophets, cast devils out of men by a word, and by the bidding of His voice nerved the palsied, cleansed the leprous, enlightened the blind, gave stepping to the lame, revived the dead, made the elements to wait on Him, the winds to serve, the seas to obey, hell itself to submit to Him ; the Jews, who had believed Him only Man for the lowliness of flesh and body, thought Him a sorcerer for the fulness of His power. Their masters and rulers, whom He confuted both in learning and wisdom, inflamed by anger, and stimulated by indignation, at length laid hold of Him, and delivered Him to Pontius Pilate, at that time procurator of Syria on the part of the Romans ; and with violent and importunate petitionings, demanded His crucifixion and death. That they should do thus, Himself had foretold, and all the prophets had also given witness ; that He must needs suffer, not merely in order to experience but to conquer death ; and having suffered should go back again into heaven, that He might manifest the power of the Divine majesty. The course of events fulfilled the promise. For on the Cross He of Himself yielded up the ghost, anticipating the office of the executioner, and of Himself on the third day He rose again from the dead. He appeared to His disciples such as He had been ; He gave their eyes opportunity of recognising Him ; mingling with them, visible in the substance of the material body, He continued until forty days, that they might be instructed by Him in the lively precepts, and learn what they

were to teach. Then into heaven He was raised, with a cloud around Him; that man which He loved, which He put on, which He covered from death, He might with victory bring in before the Father; hereafter soon to return from heaven for the punishment of Satan and the judgment of the human race, in the might of an Avenger and the power of a Judge; whilst the disciples, spread over the world at the bidding of their Master and God, taught the precepts of God unto salvation, led men from the error of darkness unto the way of light, and gave eyes to the blind and ignorant, for the acknowledgment of the truth. And lest their testimony should fail in cogency, or the confession of Christ become an indulgence, they were tried by torments, by crucifixion, and many kinds of sufferings. Pain, which is the test of truth, is applied; that Christ the Son of God, who is believed in as given to mankind that they may live, might be declared not only in the heralding of the voice, but by the testimony of suffering. Him therefore we accompany; Him we follow; Him have we for Guide of our journey, Source of light, Author of salvation; who promises both heaven and the Father to them that seek and believe. What Christ is, shall we Christians be, if we become imitators of Christ^c.

THE GOSPEL.

ST. JOHN viii. 46—59.

“Jesus said, Which of you convinceth Me of sin.”

CHRIST asked plainly, *Which of you convinceth Me of sin?* And no man spake, nor said, “Thou blasphemest because Thou makest Thyself to be without

^c St. Cyprian, Treatise ii.

But if the Jews had had it in their power to do so, they would not have held their peace. For who would have stoned Him because they heard He was before Abraham, and who said that He was not of God, who boasted that they, murderers as they were, were of God; but who, after He had wrought such wonders, said that He who did such wonders was not of God [was a sinner], because He kept not the Sabbath; if they had had but the shadow of a charge against Him, would never have let it pass.

And if I say the truth, why do ye not believe Me? He that is of God heareth God's words; ye therefore hear not, because ye are not of God.

Having before proved them to be of the devil, by their lying and their murder, He now sheweth them alien from Abraham and from God, both because they hated one who had done no wrong, and because they would not hear His Word. In every way He sheweth that He was not opposed to God, and that it was not on this account that they refused to believe, because they themselves were aliens from God. When One who had done no sin, who said that He was from God, and was sent of God, who spake the truth, and so spake it as to challenge all to the proof, and after this was not believed, it is clear that He was not believed because of their being carnal. For to use, yea, they do use to debase a soul. Where Paul saith, "Seeing ye are become dull of hearing." For when a man cannot despise that which is earthly, how shall he ever be wise concerning that which is heavenly?

Then answered the Jews, and said unto Him, Say we well, that Thou art a Samaritan, and hast a devil?

He answered, I have not a devil; but I honour My Father, and ye do dishonour Me.

shameless and forward thing is wickedness, when

^d Heb. v. 11.

it ought to hide itself then is it the fiercer. This was the case with the Jews. For when they ought to have been pricked by what was said, admiring the boldness and conclusiveness of the words, they even insult Him, calling Him a Samaritan, and saying that He had a devil; and they ask, *Say we not well, that Thou art a Samaritan, and hast a devil?* Because, when He uttereth anything sublime, it is thought among the very senseless to be madness. The Evangelist hath not said before that they called Him "a Samaritan," but from the expression here it seems probable that this had been often said by them.

"Thou hast a devil," saith one. Who is it that hath a devil, he that honoureth God, or he that insulteth Him that honoureth God? What, then, saith Christ, who is very meekness and gentleness? *I have not a devil; but I honour My Father.* Where there was need to instruct them, to pull down their excessive insolence, to teach them not to be proud because of Abraham, He was vehement; but when it was needful that He being insulted should bear it, He shewed great gentleness. When they said, "We have God and Abraham for our Father," He touched them sharply; but when they called Him a demoniac, He spake gently, thus teaching us to avenge insults offered to God, but to overlook such as are offered to ourselves.

I seek not Mine own glory: there is one that seeketh and judgeth. "These things," He saith, "I have spoken, to shew that it becometh not you, being murderers, to call God your Father; so that I have spoken them through honour for Him; and for His sake do I hear these reproaches, and for His sake do ye dishonour Me. Yet I care not for this insult; to Him for whose sake I now hear these things, ye owe an account of your words. For *I seek not Mine own glory.* Wherefore I do not punish you, but betake Myself to exhortation, and counsel you so to act, that

we shall not only escape punishment, but also attain to eternal life."

Verily, verily, I say unto you, If a man keep My saying, he shall never see death.

Here He speaketh not of faith only, but of a pure life. Formerly He had said, "many have everlasting life;" but here, *shall not see death*^o. He revealeth not to them what kind of death He meant, but in the meantime He would have them believe that He is greater than Abraham.

But they say unto Him, *Now we know that Thou hast a devil: Abraham is dead, and the prophets; and Thou sayest, If a man keep My saying, he shall never taste of death.*

That is, "They who heard the word of God are dead, and shall they who have heard Thy word not live?"

Art Thou greater than our father Abraham?

Alas, for their vain-glory! Again do they betake themselves to this relationship to Abraham. Yet it would have been suitable to say, "Art Thou greater than God? or they who have heard Thee greater than Abraham?" But they say not this, because they thought that He was even less than Abraham^f.

They were indignant, these dead men, and said, *Now we know that Thou hast a devil: Abraham is dead, and the prophets.* Howbeit, by this death which the word meaneth, is neither Abraham dead nor the prophets. For those died and yet live; these Jews lived and were dead.

* "What meaneth this saying, but that the Lord saw another death from which He was come to deliver us; the second death, eternal death, death of hell, death of damnation with the devil and his angels? That is indeed death; for this death of ours is but a mitigation. What is this death? a leaving of the body, a putting off a heavy load; provided, however, there be not another load carried by which the man shall be cast headlong into hell. Of that death, then, the Lord said, 'He shall not see death who shall keep My saying.'"—St. Augustine in *loc.*

^f St. Chrysostom.

Whom makest Thou Thyself? they say, that Thou shouldst say, "He shall not see death who keepeth My saying," when Thou knowest that both Abraham is dead and the prophets?

Whom makest Thou Thyself?

Jesus answered, If I honour Myself, My honour is nothing: it is My Father that honoureth Me.

This He said because of that which they had asked, *Whom makest Thou Thyself?* He referreth His glory to the Father^g.

It is, then, saith He, My Father that honoureth Me, of whom ye say, that He is your God: yet ye have not known Him. The Lord Christ affirmeth that same to be His Father whom they affirmed to be their God, and yet knew not: for had they known Him they would have received His Son^h.

But I know Him: and if I should say, I know Him not, I shall be a liar like unto you; but I know Him, and keep His saying.

Here they might have refuted Him if they had had anything to say, for that He kept His Father's saying was the strongest proof of His having been sent by God.

Your father Abraham rejoiced to see My dayⁱ, and he saw it, and was glad.

Again He sheweth that they were aliens from the race of Abraham, if they grieved at what he rejoiced in^k.

A great testimony He beareth to Abraham; He,

^g "Sometimes the Arians take occasion of this word to impeach our faith, and say, 'Lo, the Father is greater, because it is He that glorifieth the Son.' Thou heretic, hast thou not read where the Son Himself saith that He glorifieth His Father? If both the Father glorifieth the Son, and the Son the Father, leave thy stubbornness, acknowledge equality, correct thy perversity."—St. Augustine.

^h St. Augustine.

ⁱ "*My day* seems to me to mean the day of the crucifixion, which Abraham foreshewed typically by the offering of the ram and of Isaac."—St. Chrysostom.

^k St. Chrysostom.

the seed of Abraham, Creator of Abraham : Abraham rejoiced, saith He, that he might see My day ; not feared, but rejoiced. For there was in him the love that casteth out fear. Believing, he rejoiced in hope, that he might see in understanding. *And he saw.* What could our Lord Jesus Christ say more, or what ought He to have said more? *And he saw it, and was glad.* Who can express this joy, my brethren? If they rejoiced for whom the Lord opened the eyes of the flesh, what must have been the joy of one seeing with the eyes of the heart the ineffable Light, the Word abiding, the Brightness which shineth for godly minds, the Wisdom unfailing, God abiding with the Father, and sometime to come in the flesh, yet not to quit the bosom of the Father? All this Abraham saw. For that He saith, *My day*, it may be uncertain of what He said it, whether of the temporal day of the Lord in which He was to come in the flesh, or of the day of the Lord which knoweth no dawn, no setting. But I doubt not that father Abraham knew the whole¹.

Then said the Jews unto Him, Thou art not yet fifty years old, and hast Thou seen Abraham? Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Before Abraham was, I am.

Wherefore said He not, "Before Abraham was, I was," instead of, "*I am?*" As the Father useth this expression "*I AM*," so also doth Christ ; for it signifieth continuous Being, irrespective of all time ; on which account the expression seemed to them to be blasphemous^m.

Then took they up stones to cast at Him : but Jesus hid Himself, and went out of the temple, going through the midst of them, and so passed by.

They took up stones. Such hardness as theirs, to what should it betake itself but to its like ! But Jesus bore Himself as man, as in the form of a ser-

¹ St. Augustine.

^m St. Chrysostom.

vant, as lowly, as one that should suffer, as one that should die, as one that should with His blood redeem us; not as HE THAT IS, not as the Word in the beginning, and the Word with God. For when they took up stones to cast at Him, what great matter were it for Him to cause that the earth should cleave asunder and swallow them up forthwith? It were no great matter for God to do this; but He would rather enhance His patience than put forth His power. *He hid Himself*, therefore, from them, that He might not be stoned. As man, He fled from the stones: but woe to them from whose stony hearts God fleeth ⁿ!

ⁿ St. Augustine.

THE SUNDAY NEXT BEFORE EASTER.

THE EPISTLE.

PHIL. ii. 5—11.

“Let this mind be in you^a,” &c.

Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus.

Our Lord Jesus Christ, when exhorting His disciples to great actions, places before them Himself, and the Father, and the prophets, as examples^b. This doth also the blessed Paul; in exhorting to humility, he brings forward Christ. Nothing rouses a great soul, and one that loves wisdom, to the performance of good

^a “St. Paul, writing to the Philippians, Roman inhabitants of a heathen country in Greece, was obliged in his teaching concerning Christ’s self-humiliation to guard them and the Gentiles generally against such errors as, under the influence of false teachers, the ancient heathens were likely to be betrayed into.

“When the Gentiles heard of the humiliation of the Son of God, and of His descent from His heavenly throne, they might be tempted to think of the traditions of their own Pagan mythology. Kronus had been dispossessed by Zeus, and Saturnus by Jupiter in the Greek and Roman Pantheon. The Titans had rebelled against the usurping son of the ancient ruler of Olympus. The heathens, therefore, might be told by some (and such indeed was the tendency of much of the Gnostic speculations) that the condescension of the Son of God in Christian theology, was only a just act of deposition from a usurped dignity, or an abdication forced on him by a conscious sense of usurpation, such as the heathens were familiar with in their own mythology.

“Standing on the low ground of their own unregenerate reason, they might well be slow to suppose that such a stupendous act of condescension and self-sacrifice, as that of the Son of God, was one of free choice. It is only by faith in God’s word that we can rise to the mystery of the Incarnation.”

^b St. Matt. v. 12; St. Luke vi. 23; St. John xv. 20; St. Matt. xi. 29; St. Luke vi. 36.

works, so much as learning that in this it is likened to God. What encouragement is equal to this? None. This Paul well knowing, when he would exhort them to humility, first beseeches them, and afterwards says,

Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God.

Consider how many heresies are here confuted. *Marcion* condemns the world and the flesh as the work of the evil one, and thence affirms that flesh could not be assumed by God, and that the body which Christ took was a mere shadow and phantom. *Photinus* and others say, that the Word is only a power of God, and not a Person. *Paul of Samosata* affirms that He began to exist from Mary. *Sabellius* asserts that Father, Son, and Holy Ghost are mere names of one Personal God. *Arius* that the Son is a creature. *Apollinarius* that He had not a human soul.

All these are confuted by these words of the Apostle. "For, against *Marcion* we say, How could that flesh be a mere shadow and phantom, which was taken by One who had the form of a servant, and was found in the fashion of a man, and who suffered death on the Cross? And to the others above-mentioned, we put these questions, How can the Son be merely a Power and not a Substance, since He who is said to have taken the form of a servant, is said also to have pre-existed in the form of God? How can it be alleged that He derived His existence from Mary, when He is declared by the Apostle to have subsisted in the form of God? How can He be thought to be a mere Name, when He is said to have existed in a state of equality with God? Equality is between two things. No one can be said to be equal to himself. Therefore we here see a duality of Persons in the One Godhead. How, again, can He be thought to be a Creature, when it is asserted by St. Paul that He existed in the form of God, that is, in the very nature and essence of God, and that He did not count it an unjust assumption on His part

(as the Arians do for Him) to be equal with God? How, lastly, could it have been said by the Apostle, that He took the form of a servant, and suffered death (which is the separation of soul and body), if He had not also a *human soul* as well as a *human body*^c?"

Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God; but made Himself of no reputation^d, and took upon Him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men.

Since many men think that, when they are lowly they are deprived of their rights and degraded, he, to take away this fear, and to shew that we must not be thus affected, says concerning God, that God, the only-begotten Son of the Father, Who was in the form of God, Who was no whit inferior to the Father, Who was equal to Him, thought it not robbery to be equal with God; but emptied Himself, &c.

Now learn what this meaneth. Whatsoever a man steals and takes contrary to his right, he dares not lay aside, from fear lest it perish and fall from his possession, but he keeps hold of it continually. He who possesses a dignity which is natural to him, fears not to descend from that dignity. As, for example, when a man rebels against his sovereign and usurps the kingdom, he dares not lay aside or conceal the matter, for if he once put it away, straightway it is gone. They who have obtained aught by rapine are afraid to lay

^c From St. Chrysostom as condensed in the Commentary of Bp. of Lincoln, who says, "The Fathers rightly dwell on this clause, and the context generally, as a safeguard against almost all the heresies concerning the Nature and Person of Christ." See Chrysostom, Theodoret, Theophylact, Tertullian, &c.; and Bishop Bull, who says, "*This one passage*, if it be rightly understood, is sufficient for the refutation of all the heresies against the Person of our Lord Jesus Christ."

^d Literally: "But emptied Himself, taking the form of a servant, being made in the likeness of men." "If any man doubt how Christ emptied Himself, the text will satisfy him,—by taking the form of a servant; if any still question how He took the form of a servant, he hath the Apostle's solution,—by being made in the likeness of men."—Pearson on the Creed, Art. II.

it by, or put it away, or not to keep constantly in that state which they have assumed. Not so they who have possessions not procured by rapine. What do we say then? That the Son of God feared not to descend from His right, for Deity was not to Him a matter of robbery; He was not afraid that any would strip Him of that nature or that right, wherefore He laid it^e aside, being confident that He should take it up again. He hid it, knowing that He was not made inferior by so doing. He possessed not that estate by robbery; it was natural, not conferred, it was enduring and safe. Wherefore He refused not to take the form of an inferior. The usurping tyrant fears to lay aside the purple robe in war, while the king does it in safety. Why so? because he holds his power not as a matter of robbery. Christ did not refuse to lay it aside as one who had usurped it, but since He had it as His own by nature, since it could never be parted from Him, He concealed it.

This equality with God, then, He had not by robbery, but as His own by nature. Wherefore *He emptied Himself*, that is, of His own divine glory. Where be they who affirm that He underwent constraint, that He was subjected? Scripture says, “He emptied *Himself*,” He humbled *Himself*, and became obedient unto death. How did He empty Himself? By taking the form of a servant, being made in the likeness of men, and being found in fashion as a man.

And being found in fashion as a man, He humbled Himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.

He became obedient willingly as a Son to His Father: He fell not thus into a servile state, but by this very act above all others guarded His wondrous Sonship, by thus greatly honouring the Father. He honoured the Father, not that thou shouldst dishonour Him, but that thou shouldst the rather admire Him, and learn

^e The right, that is, not the nature.

from this act that He is a true Son, in honouring His Father more than all besides. No one hath thus honoured God. As was His height, such was the corresponding humiliation which He underwent. As He is greater than all, and no one is equal to Him, so in honouring His Father He surpassed all, not by necessity, nor unwillingly. This, too, is part of His excellence; yea, words fail me. Truly it is a great and unspeakable thing, that He became a servant; that He underwent death is far greater; but there is something still greater, more strange; what is it? All deaths are not alike; His death seemed to be the most ignominious of all, to be full of shame, to be accursed; for it is written, "Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree¹." For this cause the Jews eagerly desired to slay Him on this manner, to make Him a reproach, that, if no one fell away from Him by reason of His death, yet they might do so from the manner of His death. For this cause two thieves were crucified with Him, and He in the midst, that He might share their ill repute, and also that the Scripture might be fulfilled, "He was numbered with the transgressors²." Yet so much the more doth truth shine forth, so much the more doth it become bright; for when His enemies plotted such things against His glory, and it yet shines forth, the wonder appeareth still greater. It was not by slaying Him simply, but by slaying Him in such sort, that they thought to make Him abominable, to prove Him more abominable than all men; but they prevailed nothing.

Wherefore God also hath highly exalted Him, and given Him a Name which is above every name; that at the Name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

Let us, then, believe to His glory, let us live to His

¹ Gal. iii. 13.

² Isa. liii. 12.

glory, for the one is of no use without the other; when we glorify Him rightly, but live not rightly, then do we especially insult Him, because we are enrolled under Him as a Master and Teacher, and yet despise Him, and stand in no dread of His fearful judgment-seat. It is no wonder that the heathen live impurely. This merits not such condemnation. But that Christians, who partake in such great mysteries, who enjoy so great glory, that they should live thus impurely, this is worst of all, and unbearable. For consider, He was obedient to the uttermost, wherefore He received the honour which is on high. He became a servant, wherefore He is Lord of all. Let us not suppose, then, that we descend from what is our due, when we humble ourselves. For thus, in all likelihood, shall we be more highly exalted; then do we especially become admirable. For that the lofty man is really low, and that the lowly man is exalted, Christ Himself declares. Let us see how the matter stands. Satan was an angel, he exalted himself. What then? Was he not humbled beyond all other? Has he not the earth as his place? Is he not condemned and accused by all? Paul was a man, and humbled himself. What then? Is he not admired? Is he not praised? Is he not the friend of Christ? Wrought he not greater things than Christ? Did he not oftentimes command the devil as a captive slave? Did he not hold him up to scorn? Held he not his head bruised under his feet? Why speak I of this? Absalom exalted himself; David humbled himself; which of the twain was raised up? which became glorious? Of two men, both rich, honoured, high in wisdom, power, and other worldly advantages, which is the greater, he who seeks honour from all, even more honour than is his due, and who is angry if he receive it not; or he who despises the whole thing, never bears himself unkindly to any one, because he withholds honour, and even evades it when it is offered? Which is the greater?

Surely the latter. For it is not possible to obtain glory any other way than by fleeing from glory; for so long as we pursue it, it flies from us; but when we flee from it, it pursues us. Remember, that all honour him who does not grasp at glory, but spurn him who seeks it. For the nature of man somehow or other is fond of contention, and inclined to contradiction. If thou wouldst be glorious, do not desire glory; if thou wouldst be lofty, do not make thyself lofty.

Haughtiness is a great evil, it is better to be a fool than to be haughty; for in the one case the folly is only a perversion of intellect, but in the other it is worse; for it is folly joined with madness: the fool is an evil to himself, but the haughty man is a plague to others also.

Listen to the wise man, who says, "Seest thou a man wise in his own conceit? there is more hope of a fool than of him^b." Wherefore, St. Paul also said, "Be not wise in your own conceits." Tell me what description of bodies we say are in good health, those which are much inflated, and are inwardly full of air and water, or those which are kept low, and have their appearance marked by self-restraint? It is manifest we should choose the latter. So, too, with the soul; that which is puffed up has a worse disease than dropsy, whilst that which is under restraint is kept from all evil. How great, then, are the good things which lowliness of mind brings to us! What wouldst thou have? Forbearance? freedom from anger? love to our fellow-men? soberness? attentiveness? All these good things spring from lowly-mindedness, and their contraries from haughtiness; the haughty man is insolent, wrathful, bitter, sullen,—a beast rather than a man. Art thou strong, and proud of thy strength? Thou shouldst rather be humble on this account. Why art thou proud of a thing of nought? For a lion is bolder than thou, a wild boar is stronger, and thou art

^b Prov. xxvi. 12.

not even as a fly in comparison with them. Robbers, too, and violators of tombs, and gladiators, and even thine own slaves, and some perchance of the worst of men, are stronger than thou. Is this, then, a fit subject for praise? Art thou proud of such a matter? Bury thyself for shame!

But art thou handsome and beautiful? This is the boast of crows! Thou art not fairer than the peacock, as regards either its colour or its plumage; the bird beats thee, it far surpasseth thee. The swan, too, is passing fair, and many other birds, with which if thou art compared thou wilt see that thou art nought. Often, too, the worthless and effeminate have their boast; is this, then, a ground for arrogance? But art thou rich? Whence? What hast thou? gold, silver, precious stones? That which is supplied by the labour of criminals becomes to thee a boast! Dost thou adorn and deck thyself out? Well, we may see horses also decked out, and among the Persians camels too, and of men, all such as are about the stage. Art thou not then ashamed to boast thyself of the things in which unreasoning animals, and slaves, and murderers, the effeminate, robbers, violators of tombs, share with thee? Dost thou build splendid palaces? What of that? Many jackdaws dwell in more splendid houses, and have more noble retreats. Dost thou not see how many, who were mad after money, have built houses in fields and desert places, that are retreats for jackdaws? Art thou proud on account of thy voice? Thou canst by no means sing more shrilly than the swan or the nightingale. Is it for thy varied knowledge of arts? But what is wiser than the bee in this; what embroiderer, what painter, what geometrician, can imitate her works? Is it for the fineness of thine apparel? Here the spiders beat thee. Is it for the swiftness of thy feet? Again the first prize is with the unreasoning animals—the hare, and the gazelle, and all the swift-footed amongst the beasts. Hast thou

travelled much? Not more than the birds; their transit is more easily made, they have no need of provisions for the way, nor of beasts of burden; their wings are all-sufficient for them, these are their vessel, their beast of burden, their car; even their wind, in short, all that a man can name. But art thou clear-sighted? Not as the gazelle; not as the eagle. Art thou quick of hearing? The ass is more so. Of scent? The hound suffers thee not to surpass him. Art thou a good provider? Yet thou art inferior to the ant. Dost thou gather gold? Yet not as the Indian ants. Art thou proud because of thy health? Unreasoning creatures are far better than we both in habit of body, and in independence, for they fear no poverty. "Behold the fowls of the air, for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns¹." "And surely," Christ means, "God has not created the irrational animals superior to ourselves." Dost thou mark what want of consideration is here? Dost thou observe the great advantage of investigating this matter? He, whose mind is lifted up above all others, is found to be even lower than the irrational creatures.

But let us have pity on him, and not follow his example; nor, because the limits of our mortal nature are too narrow for his conceit of himself, let us proceed to lower him to the level of the beasts which are without reason. Rather let us lift him up from thence, not for his own sake, for he deserves no better fate, but that we may set forth the loving-kindness of God, and the honour which He has vouchsafed us. For there are things, yes, there are things wherein the irrational animals have no participation with us. And what are these? Piety, and a life based on virtue. Here thou canst never speak of fornicators, nor of effeminate persons, nor of murderers, for we have been separated from them. We know God, we acknowledge His Pro-

¹ St. Matt. vi. 26.

vidence, and we are embued with true philosophy concerning immortality. Here let the irrational animals give place. They cannot contend with us on these points. We live in self-command. Here the irrational animals have nothing in common with us. And herein lies the superiority of our dominion over them, that, while coming behind them, we yet bear rule over them: that thou might be instructed that the cause of these things is, not thyself, but God who made thee, and gave thee reason.

Sobriety of mind, a compliant temper, mildness, contempt of money, are prerogatives of our race; but since thou, who art one of those blinded by presumption, hast none of these, thou dost well in entertaining notions either above the level of mankind, or beneath the very irrational creatures. For while this is the nature of blind presumption and audacity, it is either unduly elevated, or, on the other hand, it is unduly depressed, never observing a proper proportion. We are equal to angels in this respect, that we have a kingdom pledged to us, the choir^k, unto which Christ is joined. He that is a man may be scourged, yet does he not succumb. He laughs at death, he is a stranger to fear and trembling, he does not court the larger portion. All who are not like this, are beneath the irrational animals. For when thou wouldst have the advantage in things of the body, but hast no advantage in things of the soul, how art thou aught else than inferior to them, who surpass thee in strength, in swiftness, in beauty, in size? Whence dost thou derive thy title to rule the irrational creatures? From reason? But thou hast it not; for when thou ceasest to make a due use of it, thou dost degenerate into something inferior to them. When thou, possessing reason, art more irrational than they, it had been better hadst thou never been capable of exercising reason. For to

^k See Rev. xiv. 4.

let pass the season of receiving is not the same thing as, after having received dominion, to betray the trust. That sovereign who is below the level of his guards, had better never have had on the purple. And it is the very same thing in this case. Knowing, then, that without virtue we are inferior to the very brutes, let us exercise ourselves therein, that we may enjoy the promised blessings, through the grace and loving-kindness of our Lord Jesus Christ, to whom be glory and dominion for ever and ever¹.

THE GOSPEL.

ST. MATTHEW xxvii. 1—54.

“When it was day, they led away Jesus from Caiaphas to Pilate.”

THEY led Him to the governor because they were desirous to put Him to death, but were not themselves able because of the feast. Observe how the act was forced on, so that it should take place at the feast, for so it was typified from the first.

The repentance of Judas.

Mark when it is that Judas feels remorse. When his sin is completed, and has received its accomplishment. For this is the devil's plan of action; he suffers not those that are not watchful to see the evil before this, lest they should repent and escape him. Thus, when Jesus was saying so many things which might have warned Judas, he was not influenced by them, but when his offence was completed, then repentance came upon him; and then not profitably. For though

¹ St. Chrysostom.

to condemn his own deed, and to cast down the pieces of silver, and to disregard the Jewish people, were all acceptable actions; yet to hang himself was unpardonable, and the work of an evil spirit. For the devil led him out of his repentance too soon, so that he could reap from it no fruit.

See the truth shining forth on every side, even by what the adversaries both do and suffer. For, indeed, the end of the traitor stops the mouths of them that had condemned Christ, and leaves them not so much as the shadow of an excuse. What could they have to say, when the very traitor is shewn to pass such a sentence on himself?

And the saying, *See thou to that*, is of itself a most heavy charge against the rulers, for it is the language of men bearing witness to their own daring and their own transgression, yet intoxicated by their passion, not willing to forbear their Satanical attempts, but senselessly wrapping themselves up in a veil of feigned ignorance. What hindered them, when, throwing the whole blame upon the traitor, and saying, *See thou to that*, what hindered them forbearing the criminal act, and escaping the guilt of the murder of Christ?

"Not into the treasury."

Seest thou them again condemned by their own conscience? For, because they knew that they had been buying the murder, they put not the pieces of silver into the treasury, but bought a field to bury strangers in. And this also became a witness against them, and a proof of their treason. For the name of the place, more clearly than a trumpet, proclaimed their blood-guiltiness. And they did not this without consideration, but having taken counsel together (as they did throughout), so that no one of them could be clear of the deed, but all guilty together. These things prophecy foretold from of old; not the Apostles only, but the Prophets beforehand, declaring exactly those things which were matters of reproach, every way proclaim-

ing the promise. And thus did the Jews also, without being conscious of it. For if they had cast the pieces of silver into the treasury, the truth would not have been so clearly displayed; but by buying the piece of ground, they made it manifest even to subsequent generations.

Pilate asks, "Art Thou the King of the Jews?" He answers. The rulers accuse Him: He is silent.

Seest thou what He is first asked? What the rulers set forth most prominently? Seeing Pilate make no account of the matters of the Law, they now direct their accusation to the State charges. So likewise did they in the case of the Apostles, ever bringing this forward, that they were going about proclaiming one Jesus to be King^m; speaking of Him as a mere man, they cast upon the Apostles the suspicion of rebellion.

Concerning this, then, Pilate enquired, *Art Thou the King of the Jews?* What answered Christ? *Thou sayest.* He confessed that He was a King, but a heavenly King, which elsewhere He declared more clearly, replying to Pilate, *My kingdom is not of this world*; in order that neither the Jews nor Pilate should have an excuse for accusing Him on this head. To refute this suspicion, indeed, He both Himself paid tribute, and commanded others to pay it; and when they would make Him a King, He fled from themⁿ.

Why, then, did He not now bring forward these things in His defence, when accused of usurpation? Because, having proof from His acts of His power, His meekness, His gentleness, His accusers were wilfully blind, and dealt unfairly, and the tribunal was corrupt. For these reasons, then, He no longer replied to their accusations; though when the High Priest adjured Him, when the governor questioned Him, He briefly answered, so as not by entire silence to appear arrogant. Even as the Prophet, declaring this same

^m Acts xvii. 7.

ⁿ St. Matt. xxii. 17; St. John vi. 15.

thing from of old, said, "In His humiliation His judgment was taken away °."

What, then, saith Pilate? *Hearest Thou not how many things they witness against Thee?* He wished that Christ should defend Himself, and be acquitted; but since He answered nothing, Pilate devised another means of saving Him.

What, then, was this? It was a custom at the feast to release one of the condemned, and Pilate attempted to deliver Him by this means: "If you are not willing to release Him as innocent, yet as guilty pardon Him for the feast's sake."

Seest thou right order here reversed? According to custom, the petition in behalf of the condemned rested with the people, and the granting it with the rulers; but now the contrary hath come to pass, and the ruler petitions the people; and yet not even thus are they softened, but they grow more savage and blood-thirsty, driven to frenzy by the passion of envy. For nothing had they whereof to accuse Him, and although He was silent, even then were they refuted by the abundance of His righteous deeds, and being silent, He overcame them that were saying ten thousand things against Him.

The dream of Pilate's wife.

What a thing now takes place; sufficient to recall them to their senses. Together with the proof from what had gone before, the dream of Pilate's wife was no small thing.

But, it may be said, It was not safe for Pilate to let Him go, because they said He made Himself a King. Pilate ought then to have sought for proofs of usurpation, as, for instance, whether He levied forces, whether He collected money, whether He forged arms; but He is led away carelessly, and therefore Christ doth not acquit him of all blame, in saying, "He that delivered Me unto thee hath the greater sin ^p."

° Isa. liii. 8, LXX. See margin of our version. ^p St. John xix. 11.

They choose Barabbas.

Pilate had found out a device to save Him; the law of the feast requiring him to release a condemned person, what do the rulers contrive in opposition? They persuade the multitude to ask Barabbas. See how much pains he taketh to deliver them from blame, and how much diligence they employ not to leave themselves a shadow of excuse. For which would have been right? To let an acknowledged criminal escape, or to set free Him of whose guilt there was a question?

Then he saith, "What, then, shall I do with the Christ?" In this way desiring to put them to the blush, by giving them the power to choose, that at least out of very shame they might ask for Him, and His deliverance should be of their bounty.

Yet even then they cried, "Crucify Him!" But Pilate said, *Why, what evil hath He done?* and washed his hands, and declared himself innocent of His blood. Why, then, didst thou not rescue Him as the centurion did Paul, standing firm against sedition and tumult? But Pilate was unmanly and weak, and all were corrupt together. In every way all excuse was taken from them.

When Pilate said, *I am innocent*; they cried, *His blood be on us, and on our children.*

Then at length, when they had given sentence against themselves, he yielded.

Nevertheless, the Lover of man, though they acted so madly both against themselves and against their children, far from confirming their sentence upon their children, confirmed it not even on themselves, but received those that repented, counting them worthy of good things beyond number. For even Paul was one of them, and the thousands that believed at Jerusalem; and if some continued in their sin, to themselves let them attribute their punishment.

The soldiers strip Him, and crown Him, and mock Him.

As though on some signal the devil was then

entering in triumph into all. For, be it that the Jews, pining with envy and jealousy, were mad against Him; as to the soldiers, whence was their rage, and from what cause? Is it not clear that it was the devil who was then entering in fury into the hearts of all?

And their insults were varied. For that Divine Head at one time they buffeted, at another they insulted with the crown of thorns, at another they smote with the reed, men unholy and accursed!

What plea shall we have after this for being moved by injuries,—after Christ hath suffered these things?

The things that were done go beyond all language. For, as though the Jews were afraid lest they should at all fall short in the crime, having killed the prophets with their own hands, this Man, with the sentence of a judge, they take part in every deed, and make it the work of their own hands, and condemn and sentence themselves, both among themselves and before Pilate, saying, *His blood be on us, and on our children*; and they insult Him, and do despite unto Him themselves, binding Him, and leading Him away, and make themselves actors of the spiteful acts done by the soldiers, and nail Him to the cross, and revile Him, and spit at Him, and deride Him. For Pilate contributed nothing in this matter, but they themselves did everything, becoming accusers, and judges, and executioners.

And these things are read amongst us when all meet together. For that the heathens may not say that we display to peoples and nations the things that are glorious and illustrious, as in the signs and the miracles, but that we hide these which are matters of reproach; therefore the grace of the Spirit hath brought it to pass, that in the full festival, when multitudes are present, and at the great eve of the Passover, then all these things should be read. When the whole world is present, then are all these acts proclaimed with a loud voice. And these being read, and made known to all, Christ is believed to be God, and is worshipped,

even because of this, that He vouchsafed to stoop so low for us, and to suffer these things, and to give us an ensample of all virtue.

Hear, therefore, what follows: *After they had mocked Him, they led Him away to crucify Him.*

And they parted the garments, by which such miracles had been wrought; but they wrought none now, Christ restraining His unspeakable power.

And they gave Him gall to drink, and this to insult Him, but He would not. John saith, that having tasted it He said, "It is finished." The prophecy was fulfilled concerning Him: "They gave Me also gall for My meat, and in My thirst they gave Me vinegar to drink⁹."

And not even here doth their contumely stop; beholding Him upon the Cross, they revile Him, themselves and the passers by; and this was more grievous than all, that on the charge of being an impostor and deceiver, He suffered these things, and as a boaster, and as vainly pretending what He said. Therefore they crucified Him publicly, that they might make a show of it in the sight of all; and therefore also did they it by the hands of the soldiers, that these things being perpetrated even by a public tribunal, the insult might be greater.

And yet who would not have been moved by the multitude that was following Him, and lamenting Him? Nay, not these wild beasts.

The title on the Cross; the thieves.

Since they prevailed not on Pilate to remove the title of *The King of the Jews*, they endeavoured by their derision to shew that He was not a King. Wherefore they said, *If He be the King of Israel, let Him now come down from the cross. He saved others, Himself He cannot save*, aiming hereby at bringing discredit even on his former miracles. And again, *If He be the Son of God, let Him deliver Him, if He will have Him.*

⁹ Ps. lxix. 21.

O execrable! most execrable! What! were not the prophets prophets, nor the righteous men righteous, because God rescued them not out of their dangers? Yea, surely they were, though suffering these things. What, then, can be equal to your folly? For if the coming of those dangers upon them did not injure their honour with you, how much less cause of offence was there in the case of this Man, when, both by what He did and by what He said, He was ever correcting beforehand this doubt of yours.

Yet, nevertheless, even when all these things were said and done, they prevailed nothing, not even at the time. Even when these things were being said, one who was depraved in such great wickedness, one who had spent his life in murders and housebreaking, such an one then confessed Him, and spoke of His kingdom, and the people bewailed Him. The truth prevailed, though, in the eyes of those who knew not the mysterious dispensations, those things seemed to bear testimony to the contrary.

At first both thieves insulted and upbraided Him, but afterwards one did so no more. That thou mightest not think that the thing had been done by any agreement, or that the thief was not a thief, it is shewn thee by his insolence in the beginning, that even upon the cross he was an enemy, but at once was changed.

The darkness.

This is the sign which He had promised to give them when they asked it, saying, "An evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign; and there shall no sign be given to it, but the sign of the prophet Jonas:" meaning the sign of His cross and His death, His burial and His resurrection. And again declaring the virtue of the cross, He said, "When ye have lifted up the Son of Man, then shall ye know that I am He." When ye have crucified Me, that is, and think

ye have overcome Me, then, above all, shall ye know My might.

For after the Crucifixion, the city was destroyed, and the Jewish state came to an end; they fell away from their polity and their freedom. The Gospel flourished, the word was spread abroad to the ends of the world; sea and land, the inhabited earth and the desert, perpetually proclaim its power. To these things, then, He refers, and also to these which took place at the very time of the Crucifixion. For, indeed, it was much more marvellous that such things should be done when He was nailed to the cross, than when He was walking on the earth. And not in this only was the wonder, but that from heaven came that sign which they had sought, and spread over all the world[†]; a thing the like of which had never before happened except in Egypt, when the passover was to take place. For, indeed, those events were a type of these.

And this was more marvellous than to come down from the cross, that being on the cross He should do such works. For if they thought He Himself had done it, they ought to have believed and feared; and if not He, but the Father, then ought they thereby to have been moved to compunction, for that darkness was a token of His anger at their crime.

But how, you may say, was it that all did not marvel, and account Him to be God? Because the race of man was then in a state of great carelessness and vice. This miracle was but one, and when it had taken place immediately passed away; and no one was concerned to enquire into the cause of it, so great was the prejudice and the habit of ungodliness.

[†] Origen, from the absence of any mention of this darkness (at the time of the full moon) by the heathen writers, thinks that, "like the other miracles which took place at the Passion, the rending of the veil and the earthquake, this also was confined to Jerusalem; or it may be extended to the whole of Judæa." And see his observations on the darkness, in the Gospel for Tuesday before Easter.

And why dost thou marvel about them that are without, who knew nothing, and by reason of their great indifference made no enquiry, when even those that were in Judæa itself, after so many miracles, yet continued to use Him despitefully, although He plainly shewed them that it was He Himself who wrought this miracle.

And even after this He speaks, that they might know that He was still alive. And He saith, *Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani*? that unto His last breath they may see that He honours His Father, and is no adversary of God. Wherefore He utters a cry from the prophet, to His last hour bearing witness to the Old Testament; by all things shewing that He is of one mind with Him that begat Him.

And Jesus, when He had cried again with a loud voice, yielded up the ghost. This is what He said: "I have power to lay down My life, and I have power to take it again," and "I lay it down of myself^u." He cried with a loud voice, that it might be shewn that the act was done with power. And Mark^x teacheth us that for this cause above all did the centurion believe, because He died with power^y.

This cry rent the veil, and opened the tombs, and made the house desolate. And He did this, not as offering insult to the Temple, (for how should He, who said, "Make not My Father's house a house of merchandise,") but as declaring the Jews to be unworthy of His abiding there; like as when He delivered it over to the Babylonians. But not for this only were these things done, they were a sign of His might, and also a prophecy of coming desolation, and of the change into the greater and higher state.

He also shewed Himself by the raising of the dead. For in the instance of Elisha^z, one on touching his

^u St. John x. 18.

^x St. Mark xv. 44.

^y Ibid. 39.

^z 2 Kings xiii. 21.

dead body rose again, but by a voice Christ raised the dead, His Body still hanging on the cross. And besides, that was a type of this: for that was done that this might be believed. And now not merely are the dead raised, but the rocks are rent, and the earth is shaken, that His persecutors might learn that He that cleft rocks asunder, and darkened the world, He, had it been His will, was able to strike themselves blind, and to rend them in pieces. But He would not; but having discharged His wrath upon the elements, it was His will by His clemency to save themselves. Yet they abated not in their madness. Such is envy, such is jealousy,—hardly is it to be stayed.

Marvel not, therefore, if now they were perverse, being thus prepared to set themselves impudently against the truth; but observe also how great signs He had wrought, some from heaven, some on earth, some in the very Temple, at once marking His indignation, and at the same time shewing that what before was unapproachable, is now to be entered, and that heaven shall be opened, and the work removed to the true Holy of Holies. They, indeed, said, *If He be the King of Israel, let Him come down now from the cross;* but He shews that He is King of all the world. And whereas they said, *Thou that destroyest the Temple, and buildest it in three days,* He shews that it shall be made for ever desolate. Again, they said, *He saved others, Himself He cannot save;* but He, while abiding on the cross, proved His power most abundantly on the bodies of His servants. For if it was a great thing for Lazarus to rise again on the fourth day, how much greater was it for those who had long ago fallen asleep, at once to appear alive, as a sign of the future resurrection. *For many bodies of the saints which slept arose, and went into the holy city, and appeared unto many.* Thus appearing, in order that this resurrection might not be accounted a delusion. And the centurion, too, then glorified God,

saying, "Truly this was a righteous man. And the multitudes that came together to that sight, returned beating their breasts^a," so great was the power of the Crucifixion.

Some say that there was a martyrdom of this centurion, who after these things grew to manhood in the faith^b.

^a St. Luke xxiii. 47, 48.

^b St. Chrysostom.

MONDAY BEFORE EASTER.

THE EPISTLE.

ISAIAH lxiii. 1—19.

“Who is this that cometh,” &c.

Who is this that cometh from Edom?

The Saviour, whose “reward is with Him and His
ark before Him^a,” hath come to the daughter of Zion,
He hath gone forth in righteousness clear as the light,
He the Saviour as a Lamp hath illuminated her, and
a Bridegroom hath rejoiced over His Bride, the
Church; yea, her Lord hath exulted over her. Be-
cause, according to His taking upon Him of flesh, and
His suffering upon the cross, it is said to Him, “That
Thy foot may be dipped in the blood of Thine ene-
mies^b,” and under the designation of Judah it is
propheied of Him, “Judah, Thou art He whom Thy
brethren shall praise: Thy hand shall be in the neck
of Thine enemies; Thy Father’s children shall bow
down before Thee. Judah is a lion’s whelp: from the
den, My Son, Thou art gone up: He stooped down,
He couched as a lion, and as an old lion; Who shall
raise Him up^c?” And again, “Binding His foal unto
the vine, and His ass’s colt unto the choice vine; He
ashed His garments in wine, and His clothes in the
blood of grapes^d.” Therefore it is He whom, when
angelic powers behold ascending, stained with blood,
the Father, they command the other angels, and
are obeyed by them: “Lift up your heads, O ye gates;

^a Isaiah lxxii. 11.

^c Gen. xlix. 8, 9.

^b Ps. lxviii. 23.

^d Ibid. 11.

and be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of glory shall come in. Who is this King of glory? The Lord strong and mighty, the Lord mighty in battle." And, again, "The Lord of Hosts, He is the King of glory^c." These words I have cited to shew that the present passage agrees with other testimonies. Also in the Song of Songs it is said, "My Beloved is white and ruddy^f:" ruddy, in His Passion; white, in His Resurrection. Therefore the angels ask the question (being startled by the strangeness of the thing; for, according to the Apostle Paul, the mystery of the Passion and Resurrection of Christ was unknown to all former generations^g), Who is this that cometh from earth thus stained with blood? *From Edom*: for by this word "Edom" both *of earth* and *blood-stained* is expressed.

With dyed garments from Bozrah?

This word "Bozrah" is interpreted *strong* and *fortified*: which either we may take as referring to Jerusalem, which was formerly surrounded with the strongest walls; in which the Lord underwent His Passion: or we may take it as referring to hell. Concerning Him it is written, "Who will bring me into the strong city^h?" in which are shut up the souls of the dead, and which is girt with the strongest guards. It is to be borne in mind that, according to history, Bozrah was not in Edom but in Moabⁱ.

There follows: *This that is glorious in His apparel, travelling in the greatness of His strength?* Of Him the Psalmist sings, "Gird Thy sword upon Thy thigh, O most mighty, with Thy glory and Thy majesty. And in Thy majesty ride prosperously, because of truth and meekness and righteousness^k."

I that speak in righteousness, mighty to save.

The Lord in these words replies to the question of

^c Ps. xxiv. 7, 8, 10.

^f Song of Solomon v. 10.

^g Rom. xvi. 25, 26.

^h Ps. lx. 9.

ⁱ Shewing, therefore, as St. Jerome would argue, that *Bozrah* is not here used to signify the city of that name.

^k Ps. xlv. 3, 4.

the inquiring angels, Seek ye who I am who ascend thus blood-stained to the heavens? The blood wherewith I am besprent argues nothing of uncomeliness but honour to Me. I am He to whom "the Father hath committed all judgment¹." Concerning Him the Psalmist also said, "Give the King Thy judgments, O God, and Thy righteousness unto the King's Son^m." "I am He who pronounce just judgment; that I may requite evil things to the wicked, and good things to the good; who came to fight against opposing powers," "to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are boundⁿ;" that their adversaries also may know punishment; and the captives, liberty.

Wherefore art Thou red in Thine apparel, and Thy garments like him that treadeth in the wine-fat?

Where it is here said *red*, in the Hebrew is read *Edom*. Therefore also above, where it is written *Edom*, it is not the name of a place, but *blood* that is meant. Again, the angels inquire, and say, "We have learnt that Thou art He who pronouncest judgment, and that the salvation of all hangs upon Thy decision. Now we further desire to know wherefore Thy garments are stained as with the blood of grapes; or what cause there may be that Thy vesture which was woven from the top throughout, and cannot be divided, and which had such pure whiteness from the virgin-womb as no fuller on earth could give it, Thou shouldest thus stain with blood? For mildness rather than cruelty, whiteness rather than gory red becometh Thee." To whom the Lord answers, not in a single versicle as before, but in many words, that they hitherto ignorant of these things may learn all, and have none occasion for further inquiry:

I have trodden the wine-press alone, and of the people there was none with Me: for I will tread them in Mine anger, and trample them in My fury, and their blood shall

St. John v. 22.

^m Ps. lxxii. 1.

ⁿ Isa. lxi. 1.

be sprinkled upon My garments, and I will stain all My raiment.

The wine-press in which are trodden out by the Saviour both punishments for the wicked and rewards for the good, He trode alone, and had therein no helper. For neither angel, nor archangel, nor thrones, nor dominions, nor any one of the heavenly powers, put on a human body and suffered for us, and trode out and ground small the opposing powers; but only He who speaks in the Psalm, "Help, Lord, for the godly man ceaseth; for the faithful fail from among the children of men^o:" so much so that even the boldest Apostle, and the firmest in the truth of the faith, St. Peter, fled, struck with fear; yea, and denied his Lord.

For the day of vengeance is in Mine heart, and the year of My redeemed is come.

This is, that at the time in which the adversaries are punished, the people of God should be set free; yea, should be redeemed with the precious Blood of the Lamb which, in the Revelation of St. John, is said to be "slain^p."

And I looked, and there was none to help; and I wondered that there was none to uphold.

He had also said in the Psalm, "I looked for some to take pity, but there was none; and for comforters, but I found none^q."

I will mention the loving-kindnesses of the Lord, and the praises of the Lord, according to all that the Lord hath bestowed on us, and the great goodness towards the house of Israel, which He hath bestowed on them, according to His mercies, and according to the multitude of His loving-kindnesses.

That being fulfilled, as I think, in the first coming of the Saviour (though most determine it of the second), in which is understood the voice of one delivering judgment, yea, fighting against and slaying His own and His people's enemies, He is described as blood-stained

^o Ps. xii. 1.

^p Rev. v. 6.

^q Ps. lxix. 20.

and victorious; and here another section begins in which, from the mouth of the people, the prophet speaks, recounting the favours of God towards them, and the hardness of their heart, on account of which Jerusalem was given up to fire, and Israel to captivity. This the Jews refer to Babylonian times. But I have shewn this to be said concerning the present time^r, in which the Jews are under the Roman yoke, and Israel having been expelled, the multitude of the Gentiles has taken their place.

For He said, Surely they are My people, children that will not lie: so He was their Saviour.

God Himself, who is the just Judge of the house of Israel, has said it; and He tempers the austerity of justice with the clemency of Him who is the Judge. "I have nourished and brought up children, and they have rebelled against Me^s." Nevertheless, they are My people, and have once been called My children; they shall not perish for ever. If they will no more despise and deny Me, they shall know Me for a Saviour who have Myself been afflicted in all their affliction.

In all their affliction He was afflicted, and the angel of His presence saved them: in His love, and in His pity, He redeemed them; and He bare them, and carried them all the days of old.

That is, God; since He not only bore our sins, but our afflictions also. He bears our infirmities, and suffers pain on our account. And next following, the Septuagint has what is not found in the Hebrew, viz. "Neither ambassador, nor messenger, but Himself saved them^t." He did not will to save His people through the instrumentality of angels, and prophets, and other holy men, but Himself came down to the lost sheep of the house of Israel; to bring back the sickly sheep upon His shoulder, to find the lost

^r i.e. S. Jerome's time.

^s Isaiah i. 2.

^t Οὐ πρέσβυς, οὐδὲ ἄγγελος, ἀλλ' αὐτός ἔσωσεν αὐτούς.

drachma, and gladly run to meet the returning prodigal son; as saith the Bride in the Song of Songs, "Let Him kiss me with the kisses of His mouth^a." Not at all by means of the patriarchs, by Moses and the prophets, but let Him take upon Him my body, and live encompassed by my flesh; let the Word become flesh; and let Him kiss me, dwelling in me, that He may be Emmanuel^x. Not therefore as an ambassador or as a messenger, but He Himself will save those who have received salvation, and that not by the merit of their works, but by the loving-kindness of God.

But if the careful reader shall answer in his silent thought, "Why, then, are not many saved, if He Himself hath saved them, and hath loved and spared His own children, and redeemed them with His own blood, and taken and lifted up those whom He has received?" The cause is plainly to be inferred. They themselves have not believed, and have provoked His Holy Spirit. God wills to save those who desire salvation, and He would incite them to their salvation, that the good will may have its reward; but they willed not to believe in Him. It is written in another place, "There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. The same came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all men through Him might believe^y." He is not to bear the blame if many would not believe. The will of Him who came was this, that all should believe and be saved. But he who provokes and grieves the Holy Spirit, or His Holy One, i.e. Christ, provokes God; for the Holy Spirit is of the same nature with the Father and the Son. Wherefore the Apostle gives the precept, "Grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed^z;" which Holy Spirit departs from the body that becomes subjected to sin; and into a perverse soul wisdom entereth not^a. Of Him the Lord spake in the Gospel, "If ye love Me,

^a Song of Solomon i. 2.

^x Isaiah vii. 14.

^y St. John i. 6, 7.

^z Eph. iv. 30.

^a Wisdom i. 4.

keep My commandments. And I will pray the Father, and He shall give you another Comforter, that He may abide with you for ever; even the Spirit of truth ^b."

Then He remembered the days of old, Moses and His people.

The Lord who from the Protector became the Adversary of the Jewish people, who provoked His Holy Spirit to wrath, so that He made war upon them; He remembered the ancient days when Moses prayed for them in the wilderness, saying, "Yet now, if Thou wilt forgive their sin—; and if not, blot me, I pray Thee, out of Thy book which Thou hast written^c." Therefore Isaiah, bearing in mind the ancient history, says:—

Where is He that brought them up out of the sea with the shepherd of His flock? where is He that put His Holy Spirit within Him? that led them by the right hand of Moses with His glorious arm, dividing the water before them, to make Himself an everlasting Name? that led them through the deep as an horse in the wilderness, that they should not stumble? As a beast goeth down into the valley, the Spirit of the Lord caused Him to rest: so didst Thou lead Thy people, to make Thyself a glorious Name.

"Where is the shepherd of His sheep? Where is He who wrought with the other shepherds of the flock; who, by His prayer and supplications caused the Spirit of God to abide in the flock of the Lord?" Or certainly, it may be thus understood—Where is that mercy of the Lord wherewith He formerly had compassion upon His people, that He might bestow upon them the grace of His Holy Spirit?—Who led out Moses His servant by the arm of His majesty, not in the wrong but in the right way? who divided the waters before them to make Himself an everlasting name, that His mighty power should be spoken of even to this day? For He led His people through

^b St. John xiv. 15—17.

^c Exod. xxxii. 32.

the vast depths of the seas, as it were a steed through the wilderness, and as horses through the plain; and the Spirit of the Lord was his Guide, that is, the Guide of the flock of the Lord.

Look down from heaven, and behold from the habitation of Thy holiness, and of Thy glory.

Thou who hast done so great things for Thy people, that Thou shouldest think us worthy of the fellowship of Thy Spirit, now also look down from heaven and behold our works; if indeed they are worthy of Thine observance. The heaven is called His holy habitation, and the house of His glory, as in the words, "Heaven is My throne, and the earth is My footstool^d." Not that the omnipotent God who holds heaven in His palm, and earth in His grasp, can be enclosed in any place; but by so much as places are the holier they are said to be His place and habitation. Wheresoever, indeed, the will of God is done, there is His habitation and the house of God.

Doubtless Thou art our Father, though Abraham be ignorant of us, and Israel acknowledge us not: Thou, O Lord, art our Father, our Redeemer, Thy Name is from everlasting.

Abraham knoweth us not, and Israel ignores us, because we have offended Thee; nor do they acknowledge their sons whom they perceive to be no longer loved by their God. But suddenly the query arises, Why has the Prophet made mention of Abraham and Israel, that is, Jacob, and passed over the name of Isaac? To which I will reply; The beginning and the end being mentioned, the middle is implied. Or thus: Abraham was called to the faith from among the Gentiles; and according to the respective qualities of his former and subsequent condition, was allotted a change of name. Jacob also through great toil attained to the name of Israel; Isaac from his birth to the end of his life retained his original name. They,

^d Isa. lxvi. 1.

therefore, who from being sinners pray for a change to a better state, come under the similitude of those to whom joys succeeded to sorrows. This is all that they ask; that, because God is their Father, and has thought them worthy of the name of His children, He may not be unmindful of His children, lest on their account the name of God be evil spoken of among the Gentiles.

O Lord, why hast Thou made us to err from Thy ways? and hardened our hearts from Thy fear?

The present passage is the prayer of a people deprecating the wrath of God, and we may understand it to be the prayer either of the righteous or of sinners; and that at one time this people give praise to God, and at another put Him to the question, and refer their own fault to God. Wherefore they say, *O Lord, why hast Thou made us to err from Thy ways? and hardened our hearts from Thy fear?* Not that God can be the cause of error or hardness of heart, but that whilst, in His patience waiting for our salvation, He does not at once lay hands upon the backsliders, He may seem to be the cause of error or hardness of heart. Being greatly displeased with some He refrains His hands from smiting, and says, "I will not punish your daughters when they commit whoredom, nor your spouses when they commit adultery^e." For He doth scourge every son whom He receiveth, and smiteth him that he may amend. And then of those who have by-no-means lost the name of sons, but by chastisement are drawn to penitence, He says, "I will visit their iniquities with a rod, and their sin with scourges; but I will not take from them My mercy, nor suffer My loving-kindness to fail^f." There is a sorrow which leads to life, and there is a sorrow which leads to death. Wherefore the sinner speaks in the Psalm, "Thou hast made our paths to err from Thy way, and

^e Hosea iv. 14.

^f Psalm lxxxix. 32, 33.

hast humbled us in the place of affliction^g." And for forty years the people wander in the desert, that they may not find the former road, nor return to the Egyptians. We read that the paths of Jerusalem are hedged up, and closed with thorns that she should not follow after her lovers; and compelled by necessity should return to her first husband^h.

Our enemies have trodden down Thy sanctuary.

Doubtless, the Temple is signified, which the Roman conquerors trod under foot. "And we are become as we were in the beginning before we were called in Abraham; and as we were whilst we were in Egypt, when we had neither God, nor kings, nor princes, nor prophets, nor the laws of God's commandments." And all these things after the Passion of the Lord, are at this day fulfilled. For on them who said, "His blood be on us and on our childrenⁱ," abides the everlasting curse. And God no longer rules over them; nor is His name called upon that which is no longer called the people of God^k.

THE GOSPEL.

ST. MARK xiv.

"After two days was the feast," &c.

The rulers conspire against Christ to take Him, but they say, "Not on the feast day, lest there be an uproar of the people."

The devil, lest he should make the Passion conspicuous, was not willing it should take place at the Passover,—the rulers, lest there should be an uproar. Mark how these were ever fearing, not the ills from God, but the ills from men.

^g Vulgate, Psalm xliii. ; E. V., xliv. 18, 19.

^h Hosea ii. 6, 7.

ⁱ St. Matt. xxvii. 25.

^k St. Jerome. Translated by the Rev.

Joseph Jackson, B.A., Horsmonden.

Yet for all this, in their furious anger, they changed their purpose again. For though they had said, Not at the feast time; yet when they found the traitor, they waited no longer, but slew Jesus at the feast.

The precious ointment is poured on His head by a woman. Not as to a mere man did she come to Him; for then she would not have wiped His feet with her hair, but as to one greater than man. Therefore that which is the most honourable member of the whole body, this she laid at Christ's feet, even her own head.

The disciples object, and say, "Why was this waste of the ointment made?"

What made them have this thought? They had heard their Master say, "I will have mercy, and not sacrifice," and blame the Jews because they omitted the weightier matters—judgment, and mercy, and faith; and they had heard Him on the Mount discourse concerning almsgiving, and hence they inferred that if He accepts not whole burnt-offerings, neither the ancient worship, much less will He accept the anointing of oil.

But though they thus thought, He, knowing her intention, suffers her. For, indeed, great was her reverence, and unspeakable her zeal; wherefore, in exceeding condescension, He permitted the oil to be poured upon His head. And He rebuked the disciples, saying, *Why trouble ye the woman?* adding a reason, as it was His will again to put them in mind of His Passion, *For she is come beforehand to anoint My Body to the burying.* And another reason, *For ye have the poor with you always, but Me ye have not always.*

The Saviour says, "Whosoever this Gospel shall be preached throughout the whole world, this also that she hath done shall be spoken of for a memorial of her."

See how He again foreshews the going forth unto the Gentiles, consoling His disciples in this way also after His death, for indeed after the Cross His power was so to shine forth, as that the Gospel should be read abroad in every part of the earth.

Who, then, is so wretched as to set his face against so much truth? For lo! what He said is come to pass, and to whatever part of the earth thou mayest go, thou wilt find this woman celebrated.

Satan enters into Judas ; he sells his Master.

The Evangelists do not shrink from saying, Judas was of the twelve, but hide none of those things which seem to be matter of reproach. And even John, who utters the higher doctrines, he most of all tells us of the insults that were offered to Christ.

The first day of unleavened bread the disciples ask Him of the preparation.

By the first day of the feast of unleavened bread, the Evangelist means the day before that feast; for they are accustomed always to reckon the day from the evening, and he makes mention of this in which in the evening the Passover must be killed; for on the fifth day of the week they came unto Him. This John calls the day before the feast of unleavened bread, speaking of the time when they came to Him¹; and another saith, "Then came the day of unleavened bread, when the Passover must be killed^m;" by *came* meaning that it was nigh, it was at the doors, making mention plainly of the evening. For they began with the evening, wherefore also each adds, When the Passover was killed.

And they say, Where wilt Thou that we prepare for this? from which it is manifest that He had no house, no place of sojourning; and I suppose neither had they, or surely they would have entreated Him to come thither. But they had not, having parted with all things.

The Saviour foretels that He shall be betrayed by one of His disciples.

See how He spares the traitor! For He saith not, Such an one shall betray Me; but, "One of you," so as by this concealment still to give him opportunity of re-

¹ St. John xiii. 1.

^m St. Luke xxii. 7.

pentance. And He chooseth even to alarm all for the sake of saving this man.

Intolerable sorrow thereupon seized that holy company. John saith they were in doubt, and looked one upon anotherⁿ, and each of them asked in fear concerning himself, although they were conscious to themselves of no such thing, every one saying, "Lord, Is it I?"

And He answered, *It is one of the twelve that dippeth with Me in the dish.* He said this, not only as desiring to relieve them, but also as willing to amend the traitor, for since after many less open warnings he still remained incorrigible, being past feeling, Christ being desirous to make him feel, now takes off his mask.

And see in His rebukes unspeakable meekness, for not even here with invective, but more in the way of compassion doth He speak, *Good were it for that man if he had never been born.* Yet, not his former insensibility alone, but his after shamelessness, was deserving of the utmost indignation. For even after this conviction, he saith, "Lord, Is it I?" Oh, insensibility! He asks this when conscious of his guilt; and what saith the most mild and gentle Jesus? "Thou hast said." He might have said, "O thou unholy, thou all unholy one; so long a time in travail with mischief; thou who hast gone thy way, and made thy devilish compact; thou who hast bargained for money to betray Me; thou whom I have convicted; Dost thou yet dare to ask, 'Lord, Is it I?'" But none of these things He saith, only, "Thou hast said;" giving to us a lesson of long-suffering.

The Last Supper.

Why was it that He ordained this Sacrament then, at the time of the Passover? That thou mightest learn from everything, both that He is the Lawgiver of the Old Testament, and that the things therein ordained

ⁿ St. John xiii. 22.

° St. Matt. xxvi. 25.

are foreshadowings of these. Therefore, I say, where the type is, there He puts the truth. He did not appoint the Sacrament until the rites of the Law were thenceforth to cease. And thus the very chief of the feasts He brings to an end, removing them all to another most awful Table, and He saith, *Take, eat, this is My Body.*

And "the evening" represents the fulness of time, and indicates that all things were now come to the very end.

And how was it they were not confounded at His words? Because He had before told them many and great things touching His Passion. Wherefore He establishes this no more, for they had heard it sufficiently, but He speaks of the cause of His Passion, namely, the taking away of sins. And He calls it *Blood of a New Testament*—that of the undertaking, the Promise, the New Law. For this He undertook of old; and this comprises the Testament that is in the New Law. And as the Old Testament had the blood of sheep and bullocks, so the New Testament has the Lord's Blood. By this also He shews that He is soon to die, using the word *testament*, and thus reminding them of the former testament, which also was dedicated with blood.

Then, having spoken with them of His Passion and Cross, He makes mention of His Resurrection: *That day that I drink it new in the kingdom of God.*

They sing an hymn.

Let them hear this, who, feeding at random like swine, rudely spurn the natural table, and rise up in drunkenness, when it were meet rather to give thanks, and end with an hymn.

Then He saith unto them, *All ye shall be offended because of Me*^p. After this He mentions also a prophecy, *For it is written, I will smite the shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered*: at once persuading them

^p See Zech. xiii. 7.

ever to give heed to the things which are written, and at the same time making it plain that He was crucified according to God's purpose; by everything shewing that He was no alien from the old covenant, nor from the God preached therein; but that all that is done is a dispensation, and was beforehand proclaimed by the prophets, thus giving them confidence about the better promises also.

And He makes us to know what the disciples were before the Crucifixion, what afterwards. For they who at His crucifixion were not able to stand their ground, these after His death were mighty, and stronger than adamant.

But Peter said, *Although all shall be offended, yet will not I.* What sayest thou, O Peter! The Prophet said, *The sheep shall be scattered*; Christ hath confirmed the saying, and sayest thou, *No*? Is not what passed before enough, when thou saidst, "Far be it from Thee," and thy mouth was stopped? For this, then, He suffers Peter to fall, teaching him to believe Christ in all things, and to account His declaration more trustworthy than our own self-confidence. And the rest, too, reaped no small benefit from Peter's denial, learning from it man's weakness and God's truth.

When Peter should have prayed, and said, "Help us, that we be not cut off," he is confident in himself, and saith, "Though all men shall be offended because of Thee, yet will I never be offended^a;"—though all should fail, I shall not fail. Christ, then, to put down self-confidence, permitted his denial. For since Peter submitted neither to Him, nor to the Prophet, since he submitted not to His words, he is instructed by his own deeds.

He commandeth the disciples to watch with Him: and they sleep.

And He cometh, and saith unto Peter, Simon, sleepest thou? couldst not thou watch one hour? Not with-

^a St. Matt. xxvi. 33.

out reason doth He reprove Peter most, though the others also had slept. Then, because the others, too, had said the same thing with Peter^r, He addresses Himself to all, convicting them of their weakness. For they who before were ready to die with Him, were now not able so much as to sorrow with Him, but sleep overcame them.

But Christ, not to make his language altogether condemnatory, saith, *The spirit truly is ready, but the flesh is weak*, For even though thou dost desire to despise death, yet for that the carnal mind draws thee down, thou wilt not be able, until God stretch forth His hand to thee^a.

My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death.

These feelings of human infirmity our Lord took upon Him as He did the flesh of human infirmity, and the death of human flesh, not by the necessity of His condition, but by the free will of His mercy, that He might transfigure into Himself His own Body, which is the Church, the head of which He deigned to be: that if, amid human temptations, any one of His faithful disciples were in sorrow and pain, such an one might not therefore think that he was separated from Christ's favour: that the body, like the chorus following the leader, might learn from its Head, that these sorrows were not sins, but proofs of human weakness^b.

He prayed, that, if it were possible, the hour might pass from Him. By this He shewed His humanity; but by saying, *Nevertheless, not what I will, but what Thou wilt*, He shewed His virtue and self-command, teaching us, even when nature drags us back, to follow God.

And again He prayed in the same words, "O My Father, if this cup may not pass away from Me except I drink it, Thy will be done^c." Again shewing Himself to be in full harmony with the will of God,

^r St. Matt. xxvi. 35.

^a St. Chrysostom, Hom. on St. Matthew xvi.

^b St. Aug. on the Psalms.

^c St. Matt. xxvi. 42.

and that this must we also always seek and follow after.

And when He returned He found them asleep again. For besides that it was late at night, their eyes were weighed down by their despondency. And wherefore came He the second time? In order to reprove them for that they were so drowned in despondency, as not to have any sense even of His presence. Yet He did not reprove them, but stood apart from them a little, shewing their unspeakable weakness, that not even when they had been rebuked, were they able to endure. But He doth not awake and rebuke them again, lest He should smite them that were already smitten, but He goes away and prays, and when He is come back again, He saith, *Sleep on now, and take your rest.* Yet then was there much need to be wakeful; but He, to shew that they will not bear so much as the sight of danger, but will be put to flight, and desert Him in their terror, and that He hath no need of their succour, and that He must by all means be delivered up, He saith, *Sleep on now and take your rest: . . . the hour is come; behold, the Son of Man is betrayed into the hands of sinners.* By these words He shews that what is to be done belongs to a Divine dispensation; and by saying, *into the hands of sinners*, also cheers up the minds of the disciples, shewing that this was the effect of the wickedness of men, not of any fault in Him.

The Betrayal.

Rise up, let us go; lo, he that betrayeth Me is at hand. By all things He taught them, that the matter was not of necessity, nor of weakness, but of some secret dispensation. For as we see, He foreknew that Judas would come, and so far from fleeing from him, He even went to meet him. *While He yet spake, cometh Judas.* And he that betrayed Him had given a token, saying, *Whomsoever I shall kiss, that same is He; take Him.* Oh, what depravity possessed the traitor's soul! With what eyes did he then look at his Master? With

what mouth kiss Him? Oh! accursed purpose! What did he devise? what did he dare? what sign of betrayal did he give? *Whomsoever I shall kiss*, he saith. He was made bold by the gentleness of his Master, by that which more than all was sufficient to shame him, and to deprive him of all excuse, even that He whom he was betraying was so meek.

And one smote a serrant of the high priest, and cut off his ear, and "He healed him^x;" manifesting His power, and thus shewing that it was not by their superior strength that they were able to seize Him.

And He said, When I taught, ye laid no hold on Me; when I held My peace, did ye come against Me? I was in the temple, and no one seized Me; and now do ye come upon Me at midnight, armed with swords and staves? What need was there of these weapons against Him who was with you always? Then He solves the difficulty why He, whom when in their hands they had not been able to hold, now willed to be taken. *The Scriptures must be fulfilled*. See how up to the very last hour, and in the very last moment of being betrayed, He did all things for their amendment, healing, prophesying, threatening; "For," he saith, "they shall perish by the sword^y."

Then *they all forsook Him, and fled*. When He was seized, they remained; but when He had said these things to the multitude, they fled. For thenceforth they saw that escape was no longer possible, when He was giving Himself up voluntarily, and saying that this was done according to the Scriptures.

The Council.

It was a council of pestilent men. Wishing to invest the plot with the appearance of a court of justice, they ask questions, but the testimony of their own witnesses agreed not together, so unsound was this court of justice, so full of confusion and disorder.

But false witnesses came and said, *We heard Him*

^x St. Mark xiv. 47; St. Luke xxii. 50.

^y St. Matt. xxvi. 52.

say, *I will destroy this Temple that is made with hands, and within three days I will build another made without hands.* And, indeed, He had said "in three days," but He said not *I will* destroy, but "destroy," and that speaking not of the temple, but of His own Body.

What, then, doth the High Priest? Willing to press Him to a defence, that by that He might entrap Him, he saith, *Hearst Thou not what these witness against Thee? But He held His peace.* For any attempt at defence were unprofitable, no man hearing. For this was a show only of a court of justice, but in truth an assault as of highway robbers.

Then the High Priest adjured Him. And He answered. And is accused of blasphemy.

What blasphemy was there in this? He had before said, when they were gathered together, "The Lord said unto My Lord, Sit Thou on My right hand^a," and interpreted the saying, and they dared say nothing, but held their peace, and from that time gainsaid Him no more. Why, then, did they now call the saying a blasphemy? And why also did Christ thus answer them? To take away all their excuse, because unto the last day He would manifest His full accordance with the Father, teaching that He was the Christ, and that He sitteth at the right hand of the Father, that He will come again to judge the world.

Having, then, rent his clothes, the High Priest saith, *What think ye?* He gives not the sentence from himself, but invites it from them, as in a case of confessed sin and manifest blasphemy. For, inasmuch as they knew that if the case came to be enquired into, and carefully decided, He would be freed from all blame, they condemn Him among themselves, and anticipate the hearers by saying, *Ye have heard the blasphemy;* all but forcing them to deliver the sentence. What then say they? He is guilty of death;

^a See St. John ii. 19—21.

^a St. Matt. xxii. 43—46.

that having taken Him as condemned, they should, by this, work on Pilate to pass sentence accordingly.

They smite and mock Him.

On that Face which the sea, when it saw It, had revered; on that Face, from which the sun, when it beheld It on the Cross, turned away its rays; on that Face they did spit, and struck It with the palms of their hands, and smote upon that Head, giving full sway to their madness. And words teeming with derision did they speak, saying *Prophecy*, because the multitude called Him a Prophet.

And Peter denied Him.

Oh, strange and wonderful act! when, indeed, he saw his master only seized, he was so fervent as to draw his sword, and cut off the man's ear; but when it was natural that he should be more indignant, to be inflamed and to burn, hearing such revilings, then he becomes a denier. Who would not have been inflamed to madness by the things that were done? Yet the disciple, overcome by fear, even denies, enduring not the threat of a miserable and mean girl; and not once only doth he deny Him, but a second time and a third.

And Luke saith that Christ looked on him; shewing that he not only denied Him, but was not even brought to remembrance from within, even though the cock had crowed, so exceedingly was he full of fear, but needed a further reminder from his Master, and His look was to him instead of a voice.

But Mark saith that when he had once denied, then first the cock crew, but when thrice, then for the second time; for he declares more particularly the meekness of the disciple, and that he was utterly dead with fear; having learnt these things of his master himself, for Mark was a follower of Peter. In which respect one could most marvel at him, that so far from hiding his teacher's fault, he declared it more distinctly than the rest, on this very account, that he was his disciple.

How, then, is it true, when Matthew affirms that

Christ said, *Verily, I say unto thee, that before the cock crow thou shalt deny me thrice*; and Mark declares, after the third denial, that the cock crew *the second time*. Most certainly it is true and in harmony. For, because at each crowing the cock is wont to crow a third and a fourth time, Mark, to shew that not even the sound checked him, and brought him to recollection, saith this. So that both things are true. For before the cock had finished the one crowing, he had denied a third time. And not even when reminded of his sin by Christ did he dare to weep openly, lest he should be betrayed by his tears; but “he went out, and wept bitterly ^b.”

^b St. Chrysostom, Hom. in Matt.

TUESDAY BEFORE EASTER.

FOR THE EPISTLE.

ISAIAH l. 5—11.

“The Lord God hath opened mine ear^a,” &c.

The Lord God hath given Me the tongue of the learned, that I should know how to speak a word in season to him that is weary: He wakeneth morning by morning, He wakeneth Mine ear to hear as the learned.

The Lord God hath opened Mine ear, and I was not rebellious, neither turned away back. I gave My back to the smiters, and My cheeks to them that plucked off the hair: I hid not My face from shame and spitting. For the Lord God will help Me; therefore shall I not be confounded: therefore have I set My face like a flint, and I know that I shall not be ashamed.

The Jews, separating this passage from that which precedes it, would refer it to the person of Isaiah, saying that he declares that he received utterance from the Lord in order that he should sustain the wearied and wandering people, and recall them to salvation; and that like unto children who are instructed in the morning hours, he should morning by morning hear of the Holy Spirit what he should speak; and that he gainsayed not His command; but to the Lord asking, “Whom shall I send; and who will go to this people?” he replied, “Here am I; send me^b.” And because he said, “Hear the word of the Lord, ye rulers of Sodom;

^a St. Jerome's Commentary on this portion of Isaiah is so connected with that on the preceding verse, that it seemed desirable to present the whole to the reader.

^b Isa. vi. 8.

give ear unto the law of our God, ye people of Gonorrah^c," they say that he underwent wrongs to such degree that he was not only exposed to verbal insults, but to the pain of stripes. And, nevertheless, that he, under the consciousness of God's command, was by no means deterred, according to that which is said by Ezekiel, "Behold, I will make thy face strong against their faces, and thy forehead strong against their foreheads. As an adamant harder than flint have I made thy forehead^d," to withstand their assaults. This they say who strive by every means to overturn the prophecies concerning Christ, and by a corrupt interpretation to twist them to a perverted sense,—as though, even if these things were indeed written with reference to Isaiah, they would be able to set aside other testimonies concerning Christ, which are so clear that they pour a glorious light upon the eyes of all His own.

To the Person of the Lord, with reference to Whom the former book concludes, these things are to be referred: that with respect to the Dispensation of His Incarnation, He was instructed, and received the tongue of discipline, that He might know when He ought to speak and when to be silent. For He who in His Passion sold His peace, now speaks through Apostles and apostolic men to all the world. And it is a matter of much knowledge to give meat to one's fellow-servants in due season, and to consider the characters of the hearers. Therefore the Apostle Paul, to those who accepted not the authority of the prophets, adduces the testimonies of their own authors^e; and this he was accustomed to do, because he had received the tongue of discipline, that he should know how to speak a word in season; whose ears there was by grace bestowed what he had not by nature; that we should understand it not to be received by the ears of the body, but by those of the mind. Of this the Lord said in the Gospel, "He who

^c Isa. i. 10.^d Ezek. iii. 8, 9.^e See Acts xvii. 28; 1 Cor. xv. 33; Tit. i. 12.

hath ears to hear, let him hear." And this discipline and learning opened His ears, that He might transmit even to us the knowledge of the Father; Whose will He resisted not, but became obedient unto death, even the death of the Cross, that He should expose His back to stripes, and upon the frame enshrining God¹ the lash should descend; nor should He turn away His cheeks from being smitten. And this he certainly endured at the hands of the servant of the High-Priest, so that in emulation, even the Jewish populace also treated Him with mockery. When beaten and spit upon, He blenched not, but as a lamb led to the slaughter, and as a sheep before the shearer, He opened not His mouth. But that the Son, in respect of the Sacrament of the Body assumed, heard from the Father what He should speak, we learn more fully from the Gospel, in which He Himself says, "The Father which sent Me, He gave me a commandment what I should say, and what I should speak²;" and, again, "As I hear, I judge."

He is near that justifieth Me; who will contend with Me? Let us stand together; who is Mine adversary? let him come near to Me. Behold, the Lord God will help Me; who is he that shall condemn Me? Lo, they all shall wax old as a garment: the moth shall eat them up.

If any one, He saith, considers Me to have been justly condemned to the Cross, and to have committed any sin, let him contend with Me. Who is there who may be judged with Me, who would not be overcome, not by the power of My majesty, but by the merits of My cause? But any one is judged in comparison with the Lord, not according to the authority of Him who reigns, but by a comparison of virtues; in like manner as also the Apostles are said to judge the twelve tribes of Israel; and the Ninevites and Saba the queen, the people of the Jews: in which sense also it is said to

¹ Pectus Dei capax.

² St. John xii. 49; v. 30.

Jerusalem, Sodom is justified of thee^h. Because, therefore, none can be justified in the presence of the Lord, they all shall wax old as a garment. But that which waxes old is near to destructionⁱ: and He saith, The moth, as it were, shall eat them up; that is, the conscience of sinners, and their jealousy of the nations brought to salvation.

Who is among you that feareth the Lord, that obeyeth the voice of His servant, that walketh in darkness, and hath no light? let him trust in the Name of the Lord, and stay upon his God.

Ye have beaten Me with whips; ye have spit upon My face; nevertheless I call My persecutors to penitence. For I will not the death of a sinner; but rather that he should return and live^k. And I say, Who is there among you who feareth the Lord, and heareth the voice of His Servant, that is, of His Son? Of this, the former part has respect to the religion of nature; the latter to that of the Incarnation. Nor should we think the fear of the Lord to be a small thing, since it is said in the Book of Proverbs, "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom^l." "Perfect love," however, "casteth out fear: because fear hath torment. He that feareth is not made perfect in love^m." Concerning which we read also elsewhere, Blessed is he who out of reverence hath feared in all things; that is, out of the fear wherewith in the service of God men are impressed. For the Lord protects the way of such, and guards the path of those walking under the guidance of this holy fear. Of this fear it is written, "The fear of the Lord overcometh all things:" and elsewhere, "There is no want to them that fear Him." In fine, after many grades of virtue we arrive at this kind of fear of the Lord. For the Divine address, in the character of a master or father instructing his pupil or son, runs:

^h St. Matt. xi. 24.

ⁱ Heb. viii. 13.

^k Ezek. xxxiii. 11.

^l Prov. ix. 10.

^m 1 John iv. 8.

“If thou criest after knowledge, and liftest up thy voice for understanding; if thou seekest her as silver, and searchest for her as for hid treasures; then shalt thou understand the fear of the Lord, and find the knowledge of God^a.” That is the fear which preserves the souls of the saints entire, and chaste, and pure; of which it is said, “The fear of the Lord is clean, enduring for ever^o.” And to this fear we are exhorted by the Divine utterance, “Fear God, and give glory to Him.” He, therefore, who thus fears the Lord, can hear the voice of His Servant, or Son, Who walked in darkness and had no light; Who had no beauty or glory, but in the likeness of sinful flesh took on Him the form of a servant, that in the flesh He might overcome sin. Concerning this it is said, that He should hope in the Name of the Lord, and stay upon His God; that whatever He might have of human weakness, He should support and sustain by the Divine Majesty. This according to the Hebrew.

But according to the Septuagint, it is said of sinners, who were unwilling to obey the voice of His Son, that they walk in the darkness of error, and therefore have no light. For “it cannot be that wisdom should enter into the perverse soul^p.” They knew not, nor understood, therefore they walk in darkness. For they did not the works of the Lord, nor obeyed His commandments; nor did they sow to themselves in righteousness, nor reap life, that they should kindle for themselves the light of knowledge. For he who desireth wisdom will keep His commandments, and the Lord will bestow her upon him. Wherefore also it is said, “Thy commandments are a light.” And elsewhere, “The commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes^q.” And it is enjoined upon the impious that they should learn to trust in the Lord, and breaking away from their sins, should stay upon Him, and by His help be sustained.

^a Prov. ii. 3—5.^o Ps. xix. 9.^p Wisdom i. 4.^q Ps. xix. 8.

Behold, all ye that kindle a fire, that compass yourselves about with sparks; walk in the light of your fire, and in the sparks that ye have kindled. This shall ye have of Mine hand, ye shall lie down in sorrow.

The exhortation is of no avail, nor after their wickedness is there hope of salvation; "They are all gone aside, they are all together become filthy^r." All kindle to themselves a fire, and fan the flame. They have in themselves wood, hay, stubble, thorns, and briers, and tares, which are given up to everlasting burning. Whence it is written in the Proverbs: "Amid much wood the fire gains vigour^s." But if a little spark seizes on much fuel, how much shall a great flame consume? For it is said in the Epistle to the Hebrews, of the earth, "That which beareth thorns and briers is rejected, and is nigh unto cursing; whose end is to be burned^t." Therefore they who are compassed about and surrounded with sparks, and are kindling for themselves a fire, are exhorted to seek salvation; and it is said to them, "Walk in the light of your fire, and in the sparks that ye have kindled," that ye may learn in punishments and torments the power of God, and return to seek salvation. But it signifies the devastation of the Jewish race, in which they have been given up to the Romans, and hitherto undergo the yoke of captivity. For all these things have been had of the hand of Christ, and they shall lie down in grief and sorrows; because moved neither by benefits nor torments were they willing to receive the Son of God. Wherefore it is said to them, "Depart from Me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels^u." This is what the Apostle also says, "The wrath is come upon them to the uttermost^x." From this passage we learn of the quality of sin, that every sin kindles for itself a flame. And in like manner as of several persons in one place, some are whole, while others are con-

^r Ps. xiv. 8.

^s Prov. xxvi. 20, LXX.

^t Heb. vi. 8.

^u St. Matt. xxv. 41.

^x 1 Thess. ii. 16.

sumed with the burnings of fever, from the presence within them of evil humours; so also the fire which is kindled by sinners finds its fuel in sin and in iniquity⁷; of which it is written, "Wickedness burneth as the fire⁸," and as the dry grass shall be devoured by the flame⁹.

THE GOSPEL^b.

ST. MARK XV. 1—39.

"They lay the Cross on Simon of Cyrene."

HE is not a Jew who bears the Cross, but an alien and a foreigner; nor does he precede, but follow Christ^c.

Figuratively, the nations take up the Cross, and the foreigner by obedience^d bears the ignominy of the Saviour^e.

But John relates that Jesus bore His own Cross, from which it is to be understood that He was Himself carrying His Cross when He went forth, but that as they journeyed Simon was forced into the service, and the Cross was given him to carry to Calvary^f.

They come to Golgotha.

The Lord would not suffer under a roof, or in the Jewish Temple, that it should not be supposed that He was offered for that people alone; but He suffered without the city, without the walls, to signify that the sacrifice was common, that it was the offering of the whole earth, that the purification was general^g.

⁷ In this sentence a link seems to be wanting, and the sense in the original is consequently obscure. ⁸ Isa. ix. 10. ⁹ St. Jerome, translated by the Rev. Joseph Jackson, B.A., Horsmonden. ^b For the greater part of this Gospel the Commentary may be used from the Gospel for the Sunday before Easter, in St. Matthew. ^c St. Ambrose, Cat. in Luke. ^d Simon is interpreted "obedient." Remigius in Cat. Aur. ^e St. Jerome, Cat. in Luke. ^f St. Aug. Cat. in Luke. ^g Chrys. Cat. Matt.

When mankind became corrupted, then Christ manifested His own body, that where corruption has been, there might spring up incorruption. Wherefore He is crucified in the place of Calvary; which place the Jewish doctors say was the burial-place of Adam^h.

The "wine mingled with myrrh." (St. Matt., "vinegar.")

The bitter vine makes bitter wine; this they gave the Lord Jesus to drink, that that might be fulfilled which was written, "They gave me also gall for my meatⁱ." And God addresses Jerusalem, "I had planted here a true vine, how art thou turned into the bitterness of a strange vine^k?"

The Divine word may be understood as the grape, which wisdom, like the wine, is enclosed; which if it do not through negligence grow sour, will acquire soundness by age. It grew sour among the Jews, and as sour vinegar they gave the Lord to drink. But as at wine, which from the produce of the vine of the New Testament the Lord is to drink with His saints in the kingdom of His Father, must needs be most sweet and most sound^l.

His garments.

He who for our sakes took upon Him all our conditions, put on our garments, the sign of Adam's death, that He might put them off, and in their stead clothe us with life and incorruption^m.

The Sacrament of unity, the bond of concord inseparably cohering, is signified in the Gospel, where the coat of our Lord Jesus Christ is in no wise parted or cut, but is received a whole garment, by them who at last should wear it, and is possessed as an inalienable and individual robe. The Divine Scripture thus speaks: "Now the coat was without seam, woven from the top throughout; they said therefore among them-

Athanasius, Cat. Luke.

ⁱ Ps. lxxix. 21.

^k Jer. ii. 21, Sept.

Jerome, Cat. Aur.

^l St. Aug., Ps. viii. 1.

^m St. Athanasius, Cat. in Luke.

selves, Let us not rend it, but cast lots for it, whose it shall be^a." It has in it a unity descending from above, as coming, that is, from heaven and from the Father; which it was not for the receiver and owner in any wise to sunder, but which he received once for all and indivisibly as one unbroken whole. He cannot own Christ's garment, who splits and divides Christ's Church. On the other hand, when, on Solomon's death, his kingdom and people were split in parts, Ahijah the prophet, meeting King Jeroboam in the field, rent his garment into twelve pieces, saying, "Take thee ten pieces; for thus saith the Lord, Behold, I will rend the kingdom out of the hand of Solomon, and will give ten tribes to thee; and two tribes shall be to him for My servant David's sake, and for Jerusalem, the city which I have chosen^c." When the twelve tribes of Israel were torn asunder, the Prophet Ahijah rent his garment. But because Christ's people cannot be rent, His coat, woven and conjoined throughout, was not divided by those to whom it fell. Individual, conjoined, co-entwined, it shews the coherent concord of our people who put on Christ. In the sacrament and sign of His garment, He has declared the unity of His Church.

He who holds not this unity of the Church, does he think that he holds the faith? He who strives against and resists the Church, is he assured that he is in the Church? Whosoever parts company with the Church, and joins himself to an adulteress, is estranged from the promises of the Church. He who leaves the Church of Christ, attains not to Christ's rewards. He is an alien, an outcast, an enemy. He can no longer have God for a Father, who has not the Church for a mother. If any man was able to escape, who remained without the ark of Noah, then will that man escape who is without the Church.

^a John xix. 23, 24.

^c 1 Kings xi. 31, Sept.

The Lord saith, "I and the Father are one^p;" and again of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, it is written, "and these three are one^q;" and does any think that oneness, thus proceeding from the Divine immutability, and cohering in heavenly sacraments, admits of being sundered in the Church, and split by the divorce of antagonistic wills? He who holds not this unity, holds not the law of God, holds not the faith of Father and Son, holds not the truth unto salvation^r.

He is mocked. "Save Thyself, and come down from the cross." "He saved others, Himself He cannot save."

Our Lord being truly the Saviour, chose, not by saving Himself, but by saving His creatures, to be acknowledged the Saviour. A physician is not by healing himself known to be a physician, unless he also gives proof of his skill towards other sick men. The Lord, being the Saviour, had no need of salvation, nor by descending from the Cross, but by dying on it, did He choose to be acknowledged as the Saviour. For truly a much greater salvation does the death of the Saviour bring to men, than the descent from the Cross^s.

As He hung on the Cross He was mocked; as He sitteth in heaven He is worshipped. Or haply is He still mocked, and may we be angry with the Jews, who mocked Him as He was dying, not as He was reigning^t?

The thieves revile.

It is good to turn the eyes of the mind on that robber, who from the jaws of the devil ascended the cross, and from the cross mounted to Paradise. Let us behold what sort of person he came to the cross, what sort of person he went from the cross. He came bound by his brother's blood, he came blood-stained, but by interior grace he was changed on the cross; and he who inflicted death upon a brother, when dying, proclaimed the life of the Lord, saying, "Lord, re-

^p St. John x. 30. ^q 1 John v. 7. ^r St. Cyprian, Treatise v.

^s St. Athanasius, Cat. Luke. ^t St. Aug., Ps. xxii. 2nd. Exp.

member me when Thou comest into Thy kingdom." On the cross the nails had fast bound his hands and feet, and there remained in him nought left free by punishment but the tongue and the heart. But God inspiring these, he offered all to Him that he found free in himself, so that according to that which is written, he did "with the heart believe unto righteousness, and with the mouth make confession unto salvation^u." He that came, such as he was, to the cross by sin, see what he departed from the cross by grace. He confessed the Lord, whom he beheld dying along with himself in human weakness, at the time that the Apostles denied Him whom they had seen performing miracles by Divine power^z.

The darkness.

As by Moses' stretching out his hands towards heaven, darkness was brought upon the Egyptians who held the servants of God in bondage, so likewise when Christ stretched out His hands on the Cross to heaven, darkness came over all the people who had cried out, *Crucify Him!* and they were deprived of all light as a sign of the darkness that should come, and that should envelope the whole people of the Jews. Further, under Moses there was darkness over the land of Egypt for three days, but all the children of Israel had light; so under Christ there was darkness over all Judæa for three hours, (because for their sins they are deprived of the light of God the Father, the splendour of Christ, and the illumination of the Holy Spirit); but over the rest of the earth there is light, which everywhere illumines the Church of God in Christ. And if to the ninth hour there was darkness over Judæa, it is manifest that light returned to them again after that; so, "When the fulness of the Gentiles shall be come in, then shall all Israel be saved^y."

^u Rom. x. 10.
Cat. in St. Mat.

^z St. Gregory, *Morals*.

^y Rom. xi. 25; Origen,

My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?

Let us so hear the words of Christ from the Psalm, that we look not only upon that Head, the one Mediator between God and Man, the Man Christ Jesus; Who also after the Divine Nature, in the beginning was the Word, God with God, which Word was made Flesh, and dwelled in us; Flesh out of the seed of Abraham, out of the seed of David, by Mary the Virgin: not only of Him who is our Head, let us think, when we hear Christ speak; but let us think of Christ, Head and whole Body, an entire Man. For to us it is said by the Apostle Paul, "Ye are the Body of Christ, and members^a:" and of Him is said by the same Apostle, that He is the head of the Church^a. If, therefore, He is Head, we Body, the whole Christ is Head and Body. Sometimes thou findest words which do not suit the Head, and unless thou shalt attach them to the Body, thy understanding will waver: again, thou findest words which are proper for the Body, and Christ, nevertheless, is speaking. In that place we must have no fear, lest a man be mistaken, for quickly he proceedeth to adapt to the Head that which he seeth is not proper for the Body. Christ hanging on the Cross speaks in the person of the Body the words, *My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me*^b? For God had not forsaken Christ by whom He had not been forsaken: nor in truth did Christ come to us in such sort as to have forsaken God; nor did God so send Him as to depart from Himself. But He saith this because man was deserted by God. Having received flesh of that sinning Adam who, though he was wont to rejoice before the face of God, yet fled from his joy, being terrified by the consciousness of sin, and because he himself left God, was truly forsaken by God;—Christ having received flesh out of this Adam, saith these words in the person of the same

^a 1 Cor. xii. 27.

^a Eph. i. 22; Colos. i. 18.

^b Ps. xxii. 1.

flesh, because our old man was nailed together with Him on the Cross^c.

My brethren, let us long for the life of Christ, seeing we hold as an earnest the death of Christ. How shall not He give us His good things, who hath suffered [for us] our evil things^d?

Not in words only, dearest brethren, did Jesus Christ our God and Lord teach us that patience is a thing of God^e, and that whoever is kind and patient and mild, is an imitator of God, but He fulfilled it also in His deeds. And since He had said that to this end He came down, to do the will of His Father, among the other wonders of His virtues, by which He exhibited the proofs of a divine Majesty, He preserved also the patience of His Father, by continuance of endurance. In fine, all His actions, even from His first coming, are marked by patience as their companion. Descending from that heavenly height into earthly places, the Son of God scorned not to put on the flesh of man; and while He Himself was not a sinner, to bear the sins of others. Meantime, putting off His immortality, He suffers Himself to be made mortal, that He, the innocent, may be slain for the salvation of the guilty. The Lord is baptized by the servant, and He who was to give remission of sins, Himself disdains not to wash His Body in the "laver of regeneration^f." He for forty days doth fast, by Whom all others are made fat; He hungers and suffers famine, that they who had been in famine of the word and of grace may be filled with bread of heaven. He withstands the devil tempting, and content with having conquered His foe, contends against him no farther than by words. He did not preside over His disciples as over servants in the power

^c Rom. vi. 6; St. Aug. on Ps. lix. 1.
^e St. Matt. v. 43—48.

^d St. Aug., Ser. lxxx.
^f Tit. iii. 5.

their Lord, but gently and mildly He loved them with a brother's affection. He condescended also to wash the feet of the Apostles, that since He being the Lord dealt thus toward His servants, He might by His example teach what manner of man a fellow-servant ought to be towards his fellows and equals. Nor need it be wondered at that He became such unto the obedient, Who in long patience could bear with Judas even unto the end, taking food with His enemy, knowing the domestic foe, yet not publicly revealing him, nor refusing even the kiss of the betrayer. Moreover, in His dealing with the Jews, how great was His equanimity, and how great His patience! Bending the unbelieving unto faith by persuading them, softening the unthankful by yielding to them, answering with gentleness them that used contradiction, with clemency bearing with the proud, and with humility giving way to the persecutors; even unto the hour of His Cross and Passion ready to gather together men who slew the Prophets, and were ever rebellious against God. And in His very Passion and Cross, before they were come to the cruelty of death and the shedding of blood, what reproaches and revilings were patiently heard by Him, what sufferings and contumely endured! He received with patience the spittings of revilers, Who a little before had with His spittle made eyes for a blind man; and He in Whose name the devil with his angels is now scourged by His servants, Himself suffered scourging; He was crowned with thorns, Who crowns martyrs with eternal flowers; He smitten on the face with palms, Who yields true palms to them that conquer; He ripped of His earthly raiment, Who clothes others with the robe of immortality; He received gall for food, Who gave the food of heaven; and He had vinegar to drink, Who instituted the cup of salvation. He innocent, He just, yea, Innocency itself, and Justice self, is numbered with the transgressors; and Truth is pressed with falsehood, the future Judge is judged, and

the Word of God led in silence to the slaughter. And while the stars are confounded before the Cross of the Lord, the elements disturbed, earth quakes, night shuts out day, and the sun, that he be not forced to witness the crime of the Jews, draws back his rays, He speaks not, and moves not, nay, in His very Passion makes no profession of His Majesty: all things even unto the end are perseveringly and unceasingly endured, that a full and perfect patience may be finished in Christ. And after all these things, He accepts even His murderers, if they turn unto Him. With saving patience, bountiful to preserve, He shuts His Church to none; those adversaries, those blasphemous, those ever enemies of His Name, if they be penitent for their sin, if they acknowledge the crime they have committed, He admits not only to forgiveness of their wickedness, but even to the reward of a heavenly kingdom. What can be named more patient, or what more bounteous? that man is quickened by the Blood of Christ, even he who shed Christ's Blood. Such and so great is the patience of Christ; had it not been such and so great, neither had the Church had Paul for an Apostle. But if we also, dearest brethren, are in Christ, if we put Him on, if He is the way of our salvation, let us, following Christ's steps, walk after the example of Christ; as John the Apostle instructs us, saying, He who saith he abideth in Christ, ought himself also to walk as He walked^s. Peter likewise, on whom the Church was founded by the good pleasure of the Lord, lays it down in his Epistle, and says, "Christ suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow His steps: Who did no sin, neither was guile found in His mouth: Who, when He was reviled, reviled not again; when He suffered, He threatened not^h;" but delivered Himself to him that unjustly judged Himⁱ.

^s 1 John ii. 6.^h 1 Pet. ii. 21—23.ⁱ St. Cyprian, Treatise xi.

WEDNESDAY BEFORE EASTER.

THE EPISTLE.

HEBREWS ix. 16—28.

“Where a testament is, there must also of necessity be the death of the testator,” &c.

Where a testament is, there must also of necessity be the death of the testator : for a testament is of force after men are dead ; otherwise it is of no strength at all while the testator liveth. Whereupon neither the first testament was dedicated without blood.

It was likely that many of the weaker minded, even from the fact of Christ's death, would be most inclined to disbelieve His promises. Paul, therefore, by way of utterly upsetting such a suspicion, presents this illustration to his readers drawn from common experience. He tells us that for this very reason we ought to be bold. On what account? Because testaments are valid and acquire their force, not when the testators are living, but when they have died^a. And upon this account, “He is the mediator of the New Testament^b.” A testament is made on the last day,—the day of decease. And of such a kind is the testament we are now speaking of. It has heirs, and those who are disinherited. And so also here concerning indeed the heirs, Christ says: “I will that they also, whom Thou hast given Me, may be with Me where I am^c.” And again, concerning those disinherited, hear Him speaking: “I pray not for all, but for those who

^a Heb. ix. 15.

^b This translation was made from the Oxford Edition of St. Chrysostom on the Pauline Epistles (vol. vii.), 1862. Some of the various readings have been adopted.

^c St. John xvii. 24.

believe upon Me through their (the Apostles') words^d." Moreover a testament involves certain things on the part of the testator, and others on the part of the heirs; so that the heirs are partly recipients, but partly also agents. Thus also here, after promising countless things, He also asks in return what is due from them, saying, "A new commandment I give unto you^e." Again, a testament ought to have witnesses. Hear Him again saying, "I am one that bear witness of Myself, and the Father that sent Me beareth witness of Me^f." And again: "He shall bear witness of Me^g," speaking concerning the Comforter: and He sent the twelve Apostles, saying, "Bear ye witness before God." And on this account He says He is mediator of a new covenant. What is a mediator? The mediator is not principal in the business of which he is the mediator; but while the business belongs to one person, the mediator is altogether another. As for instance, a middle man at a wedding is not the bridegroom, but he who assists the party about to take a wife. It was thus also in this case, that the Son became mediator between the Father and us. How did He become a mediator? He conveyed messages from and to the Father, transmitting commands from Him to us, and adding to these His own death. We had offended, we ought to have died; He died for us, and He made us worthy of His covenant. In this very point, in fact, is the covenant confirmed, in that for the future it is not for the unworthy. For at the beginning it was just as a father disposes of his affairs with sons; but since we were become unworthy, no longer is there place for a testament, but need for punishment. Why, therefore, do you boast, says he, of your law? for unto so great a degree of sinfulness did it reduce us as that we could not be saved at all; for unless our Master had died for us, the law would have had no

^d St. John xvii. 9, 20.^e Ibid. xiii. 34.^f Ibid. viii. 18.^g Ibid. xv. 26; E. V., testify.

power, for it is weak. And St. Paul no longer bases his reasoning on facts drawn from common experience, but on what took place under the old covenant, which would be the strongest line of argument with his countrymen. But no one, he says, had died then, (i.e. in the old covenant,) how, then, was it assured? In the same manner. For blood entered into that covenant as it does into ours; and if it be not the Blood of Christ, do not wonder, for it was a figure. *Wherefore, he says also, neither the first testament was dedicated without blood.*

What is the meaning of that word *dedicated*? It has been, he says, confirmed, it has been ratified. By *wherefore*, he means, on this account; it (blood) was necessary that the token of the covenant should also be a token of the death of the testator. For on what account, tell me, is the book of the covenant sprinkled? For he says: *When Moses had spoken every precept to all the people, according to the law, he took the blood of calves and of goats, with water, and scarlet wool, and hyssop, and sprinkled both the book, and all the people, saying, This is the blood of the testament, which God hath ordained to you.* On what account, then, tell me, are the book of the testament and the people sprinkled? Surely it was because the sprinkling with that blood, and the rest of the ceremony, was a type of the precious Blood from heaven figured thereby. Why then with hyssop also? Because, being of a close and spongy substance, it was retentive of the blood. And what means the water? It shews also the purification by water. And what the wool? This also is intended to retain the water: both blood and water point out here the same fact; for the washing is a symbol of the Passion itself.

Moreover, he sprinkled with blood both the tabernacle, and all the vessels of the ministry. And almost all things are by the law purged with blood; and without shedding of blood is no remission.

And why this *almost*, why did he thus limit it? Because he says these constituted not a perfect cleansing, not even a perfect remission, but were incomplete, and very imperfect; but here, "This is the Blood," he says, "of the New Testament, that is shed for you for the remission of sins^h." Where, then, is the book? He has purified their imaginations; they themselves were the books of the new testament. Where are the vessels of the sacred service? They themselves are the vessels. And where the tabernacle? They themselves again; "For," saith He, "I will dwell in them, and walk round about them." But not with scarlet wool nor with hyssop was He sprinkling. Why, I pray? The purification was not bodily but spiritual; so that the blood also was spiritual. For not from a body of irrational beings did it flow, but from a body prepared by the Spirit. With this blood not Moses but Christ sprinkled us through the word that was declared, "This is the blood of the New Testament, for the remission of sins." This is the Word Who, instead of hyssop, being dipped in Blood sprinkles all of us. And in that case indeed the body outwardly was cleansed; for the purification was bodily: but in our case since the purification is spiritual, it enters into the spirit and purifies; not simply sprinkling, but springing up like a well in our souls. The initiated understand what I am saying. St. Paul shews besides that death is the cause not only of ratification, but also of cleansing. For at a time when Christ's death, and above all His death by the Cross, seemed a vile thing; St. Paul says that it availed to cleanse, and that with a precious cleansing, and with a view to greater things. It was because of this, yes, because of this blood, that the sacrifices preceded; because of this blood the sacrifices of lambs and all other ceremonies were appointed.

It was therefore necessary that the patterns of things

^h St. Matt. xxvi. 28.

in the heavens should be purified with these; but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these. And in what manner are they patterns of those things in the heavens? and what things does he now call them in the heavens? Does he mean heaven? or the angels? Nothing of these,—but our own concerns. Then are our concerns in the heavens, and heavenly although they be, accomplished upon earth? For there are also angels on earth who are called heavenly, and the cherubim appeared on earth and yet are heavenly. And why do I say appeared? Nay, rather, they dwell on earth even as they did in Paradise; yet this is nothing to the point, for they are heavenly all the same. So also is our conversation in the heavens, although we pass our life here. *But the heavenly things themselves*, that is, the Christian life, led by us who have been hereunto called.

With better sacrifices than these. That which is better is better than something good; therefore even the patterns of things in the heavens have become good in our sight. For not even would the patterns be evil; otherwise those things also would be evil of which they are the patterns. If, then, we are heavenly, and have obtained such an existence, let us be full of fear; let us no longer remain on the earth¹; it is not lawful for any one even now willingly to be on the earth. For to be on the earth, and not to be, takes place by character and by choice; in some such way as I speak of, God is said to be in heaven. Not as confined in a place, God forbid; nor even as leaving the earth destitute of His Presence; but because of His nature and His intimate communion with the angels. If, then further, we are near God, we are in heaven. For what does the heavenly region concern me when I behold the Lord of heaven, when I have myself become heaven: “For we will come,” He says, “I and the Father, and we will make our abode with him.”

¹ See the Epistle for Easter Day.

For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true, but into heaven itself, now to appear in the Presence of God for us; nor yet that He should offer Himself often, as the High-Priest entereth into the holy place yearly with the blood of others; for then must He often have suffered since the foundation of the world: but now once in the end of the world hath He appeared, to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself.

The Jews used to think great things of their temple and their tabernacle, wherefore they said, "The Temple of the Lord, the Temple of the Lord, the Temple of the Lord." For nowhere in the rest of the earth was there built such a temple whether as regards costliness, beauty, or anything else. For God who ordained it to them, commanded that it should be built with lavish outlay, since even they were rather wont to be attracted and allured by material objects. But the second building was more illustrious, both on account of beauty and of all the other things. And not on this account was the Temple venerable, but also because there was one only; for from the ends of the earth they used to come to it; those who belonged to all parts of the world used to meet together there, and great was the reputation of the Temple. What, then, does Paul do? What he did in the case of sacrifices, that he does also here. For as with those he contrasted the death of Christ, so also here he contrasts the whole heaven with the Temple. And not in this only did he shew the difference, but also by adding that the priest was brought nearer to God. For he says, *To appear in the Presence of God.* So that he made the thing venerable, not only by its being in heaven, but also by the access to God. For not simply, as here, by symbols does he see God, but there he sees God Himself. Do you see that by way of accommodation (to our understanding), weak things, lowly illustrations are everywhere used? Why, then, do

you wonder any more, if this happens, in that place here he sets Him down as a High-Priest?

Nor yet that He should offer Himself often, as the High-Priest entereth into the holy place every year with blood of others. For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true.

The former, then, are the real holy places, and the latter but the figures; for the Temple was constructed on the pattern of the Heaven of heavens. What do you say? Unless He goes into heaven does He not appear before God? Who is everywhere present, and fills all things? Do you see that these things are all said of the flesh? He says, *To appear in the Presence of God for us.* What is the meaning of "for us?" He went up with a sacrifice, Paul says, which avails to propitiate the Father. For tell me, Why was this? Was He Himself at enmity with us? The angels were at enmity, Himself was not at enmity. In proof that the angels were at enmity, hear what He says: *He set at peace things upon earth, and also things in heaven*^{*}. So that He likewise entered into heaven, *not to appear in the Presence of God for us.* He appears before God now, but it is for us, not in order that He may offer Himself often, as the High-Priest enters into the holy of holies yearly with the blood of others. Do you see how many are the differences? Oftentimes contrasted with once; the blood of another with His

^{*} See Eph. i. 10. But how made He peace amongst the "things in heaven?" Was war there also? How, then, do we pray, saying, "Thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven?" (St. Matt. vi. 10.) What, then, can one say? The earth was divided from heaven, the angels are become enemies to men, through seeing their Lord insulted. To unite under one head," [E. V., to gather together in one,] he saith, "all things in Christ, which are in heaven, and which are in earth," (Eph. i. 10.) How? The things in heaven in this way: He translated Man thither, He brought up to them the enemy, the hated one. Not only made He the things on earth to be at peace, but He brought up to them him that was their enemy and foe. Here was peace profound. Angels again appeared on the earth thereafter, because that Man, too, had appeared in heaven.—St. Chrysostom on Coloss. i. 20.

own Blood. Great is the difference. He then is alike the Victim, the Priest, and the Sacrifice. For if this were not the case, and it behoved Him to offer many sacrifices, it would be necessary for Him oftentimes to be crucified. *For then must He often have suffered since the foundation of the world.* Here Paul was even somewhat obscure; he unveils his doctrine, and says that if it behoved Christ to offer sacrifices oftentimes, it would have behoved Him oftentimes also to have been crucified. *But now once in the end of the world.* Why does he use this expression, *in the end of the world?* After the multitude of sins. If, indeed, then, it (the crucifixion) had happened at the beginning, then no one would have believed, and it was not fitting that Christ should die a second time; all would have been useless; but since it was afterwards that the sins were many, then, as was fitting, He appeared. As Paul says also elsewhere, "Where sin abounded grace did much more abound¹." *But now once at the end of the world hath He appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself.*

And as it is appointed unto men once to die, and after this the judgment. After this he tells us why it is that He died once only, because it was of our death he was the ransom.

It is appointed, says he, unto men once to die. This, then, is the meaning of this saying, "He died for all men." What then? Do we no longer die that death? We die, indeed, but we do not remain in death, which is not even to die. For the tyranny of death, and death in reality, is this; whenever he, the dead man, is no longer allowed to return to life; but when, after dying, it is granted him to live, and that a better life, this is not death, but sleep. When, therefore, death was about to lay hold of all, on this account He died, in order that He might release us.

¹ Rom. v. 20.

Thus also Christ having been offered once. Offered by whom? Evidently offered by Himself. Here he points Him out to be not merely Priest alone, but also Sacrifice and Victim; on this account offered. *Once*, he says, *offered for the bearing away of the sin of many*^m. Why of many, and not of all? Because not all believed. He died indeed for all, that is, as regards His share in the matter; for He died with the object of saving all: that death weighed in the balance against the destruction of all; but it was not of all He bore away the sins, because all were not willing. And what does *He bore away the sins* mean? As at the offering we present all our sins, and say, "Whether we sinned willingly or unwillingly forgive us;" that is, we remember them first, and then we ask pardon; so also did it happen in this matter. Where has Christ done this? Hear Him saying, "And I sanctify Myself for them." Behold He lifted up their sins. He lifted them from off men, and bore them to the Father, not in order that He might decide anything against them, but in order that he might remit them. *A second time, without sin, He shall be seen*, he says, *by those who look for Him unto salvation*. What does "without sin" mean? It has the sense of, He sinneth not; for He died neither because He ought to die, nor yet on account of sin. But how shall He be seen? Punishing, we are told. But Paul did not mention this, but that which is cheering: *Unto them that look for Him shall He appear the second time without sin unto salvation*. So that there is henceforth no longer any need for a sacrifice to save them; but He does this as a result of worksⁿ.

^m E. V., to bear the sins.
translated expressly for this work.

ⁿ St. Chrysostom, in loc.,

THE GOSPEL.**ST. LUKE xxii.****“ Now the feast of unleavened bread,” &c.****The Chief Priests and Scribes conspire against the Lord.**

But how many chief priests were there? For by the Law there should be but one, and now there were many. Whence it is manifest that the Jewish constitution had begun to dissolve. For Moses, as I said, commanded there should be one, and that when he was dead there should be another, and by the life of this person he measured the banishment of them that had involuntarily committed manslaughter. How, then, were there at this time many high-priests? They were now made for a year only. This the Evangelist shewed when he was speaking of Zacharias, saying that he was of the course of Abia. These, then, doth he here call high-priests, who had been high-priests in former years.

The devil enters into Judas, the priests covenant to give him money, and he seeks opportunity to betray the Lord.

Oh, madness! how did covetousness altogether blind the traitor! For he who had often seen the Lord pass unharmed through the midst of His enemies, he who had so many times seen Him shew forth His Godhead and power, he looked to lay hold on Him, and this while He was speaking for his sake so many awful and soothing words, with which, as with a charm, to put an end to this evil thought. For not even at the Supper did the Lord forbear from this care of him, but unto the last day discoursed to him of these things. But he profited nothing. Yet not for that did the Lord cease to do His part.

Knowing this, then, let us also not intermit to do all things unto them that sin and are remiss,—warning, teaching, exhorting, admonishing, advising, though we profit nothing. For Christ, indeed, foreknew that

the traitor was incorrigible, nevertheless He ceased not to supply what could be done by Himself, as well admonishing as threatening and bewailing over him, and never plainly, nor openly, but in a concealed way; and at the very time of the betrayal He allowed him to kiss Him, but it benefited him nothing. So great an evil is covetousness; it made Judas both a traitor and a sacrilegious robber.

But how does the Evangelist say that, when he made the agreement touching the treason, then the devil seized him? but John, that "after the sop Satan entered into him^o." And John himself knew this; for further back he saith, "the devil having now put into the heart of Judas to betray Him^p," how, then, does he say, "After the sop Satan entered into him?" Because he enters not in suddenly, nor all at once, but makes much trial first, as was done in this case. For having tried Judas in the beginning, and assailed him quietly; after that he saw him prepared to receive him, he wholly breathed himself into him and completely got the better of him.

The preparation for the Passover.

Wherefore did Christ keep the Passover? To indicate by all things, unto the last day, that He was not opposed to the law.

And for what possible reason does He send them to an unknown person? To shew by this also that He might have avoided suffering. For He who so prevailed over this man's mind, and that by words only, that he received them; what could He not have done with those who crucified Him, if it had been His will not to suffer? What He before did about the ass, He did again here. But I marvel not at this only, that the man received Him, being unknown; but that expecting to bring upon himself the enmity and implacable hostility of the multitude, he despised these.

• St. John xiii. 27.

^p Ibid. 2.

And, because the disciples knew not the man, He gave them a sign, like as the prophet touching Saul, saying, "Thou shalt find one going up and carrying a bottle^a;" and here, *carrying a pitcher*.

With desire I have desired to eat this Passover with you. So welcome was the Cross to Him! At this Passover the salvation of the world was to be accomplished, and the mysteries were to be delivered, and the subject of sorrow to be done away with by His death.

The Last Supper. "Do this in remembrance of Me."

Seest thou how He removes and draws them off from Jewish customs? For like as ye did that, He saith, in remembrance of the miracles in Egypt, so do this likewise in remembrance of Me. That blood was shed for the preservation of the first-born; this, for the remission of the sins of the whole world. For, "This," saith He, "is My Blood, which is shed for the remission of sins^r."

But this He said, indicating thereby that His Passion and His Cross are a mystery, by this, too, again comforting His disciples. And as Moses saith, "This shall be to you for an everlasting memorial;" so He, too, saith, *in remembrance of Me*, until I come^s. And therefore is it that He saith, *With desire I have desired to eat this Passover*, by which I am to make you spiritual^t.

The Apostles strive which shall be accounted greatest.

Let not him that is chief be puffed up by his dignity, lest he fall away from the blessedness of humility; but let him know that true humility is the ministering unto many. As, then, he who attends many wounded and wipes away the blood from their wounds, least of all men enters upon the service for his own exaltation; much more ought he, to whom is committed the care of

^a 1 Sam. x. 3, LXX.

^r St. Matt. xxvi. 28.

^s "Until I come." St. Chrysostom, on 1 Cor. xi. 26, attributes these words expressly to St. Paul; various early writers attribute them to our Lord.

^t St. Chrys.

his sick brethren, as the minister of all about to render an account of all, to be thoughtful and anxious. And so let him that is greatest be as the younger. Again, it is meet that those who are in the chief place should be ready to offer also bodily service, after our Lord's example, who washed His disciples' feet. Hence Christ saith, *He that is chief, let him be as he that doth serve.* And we need not fear that the spirit of humility will be weakened in the inferior, while he is being served by his superior; for by imitation humility is extended ^u.

The Lord promises the Kingdom.

Not only here, my brethren, is this bread the food of the righteous, neither are the saints on the earth alone nourished by such bread and such blood, but we also eat them in heaven, for the Lord is the food even of the exalted spirits, and the angels, and He is the joy of all the heavenly host: and to all He is everything, and He spareth all according to His loving-kindness. Already hath the Lord given us angels' food ^x; and He gives a promise to those who continue with Him in His trial, saying, *And I appoint unto you a kingdom, as My Father hath appointed unto Me; that ye may eat and drink at My table in My kingdom, and sit on thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.*

What a banquet is this, my brethren, and how great is the harmony and gladness of those who eat at this heavenly table! For they delight themselves not with that food which is cast out, but with that which produces life everlasting. Who, then, shall be deemed worthy of that assembly? Who is so blessed as to be called and accounted worthy of that divine Feast? For, "blessed is he who shall eat bread in Thy kingdom ^y." He who has been adjudged worthy of this

^u St. Basil in Cat. Luc.

^x Ps. lxxviii. 25, 26. St. Athanasius on this passage in the Psalm, says that God not only fed the bodies of the Israelites with manna, but also their souls with a certain reasonable and heavenly virtue.

^y St. Luke xiv. 15.

heavenly calling, and by this calling has been sanctified, if he grow negligent in it, although washed, becomes defiled; "counting the blood of the covenant by which he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and despising the spirit of grace^a," we shall hear the words, "Friend, how camest thou in hither not having a wedding-garment^a?" The banquet of the saints is spotless and pure; "for many are called but few chosen^b." Judas, to wit, though he came to the Supper, inasmuch as he thought lightly of it, went out from the presence of the Lord, and having abandoned his Life^c, hanged himself. But the disciples who continued with the Redeemer, partook also of the happiness of the feast^d.

Woe unto the Betrayer!

But some will say, If it was written that Christ was to suffer, wherefore is Judas blamed, for he did the things that were written? He did them not with this intent, but from wickedness. If thou enquire not concerning the motive, thou wilt deliver even the devil from the charges against him. But these things are not, they are not so. For both the one and the other are deserving of immeasurable punishment, although the world was saved. For not the treason of Judas did work out salvation for us; but the wisdom of Christ, and the good contrivance of His fair skill, using the wickedness of others for our advantage^e.

The Lord warneth Simon Peter of his trial, and saith, "I have prayed for thee that thy faith fail not."

He said not "I have granted," but, *I have prayed*. For He speaks humbly as approaching His Passion, and that He may manifest His human nature. For He who had spoken not in supplication, but by authority, "Upon this rock I will build My Church, and will give thee keys of the kingdom of heaven," how

^a Heb. x. 29.

^a St. Matt. xx. 12.

^b Ibid. 14.

^c See Colos. iii. 4.

^d St. Athanasius, Fest. Ep. vii.

^e St. Chrys. in St. Matt.

should He have need of prayer that He might stay one agitated soul^f?

Marvel at the superabundance of the divine forbearance: lest He should cause a disciple to despair, before the crime was committed He granted pardon, and restored him to his Apostolic rank, saying, *Strengthen thy brethren*^g.

In proof that Christ permitted the denial of Peter with the intent to correct in him a spirit of self-confidence, hear what He saith: *I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not*, thus shewing that his fall was more grievous than that of the rest, and needed more help. For the subjects of blame were two,—that he gainsaid the Lord, and that he set himself before the rest,—or rather they were three, in that he also attributed all power to himself.

To cure, then, these evils, Christ suffered the fall to take place, and for this cause also He leaves the others, and addresses Himself earnestly to Peter: *Simon, saith He, Simon, behold Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat; that is, that he may trouble, confound, tempt you; but I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not.*

How, then, was it [if the Lord prayed for him] that Peter denied? He said not, I have prayed that thou mayest not deny, but *that thy faith fail not*, that thou perish not utterly^h.

And Peter said, *Lord, I am ready to go with Thee both into prison and to death.*

How much Peter took upon himself, in that he saw what he would, but knew not what he could. How much he took upon himself, in that, whereas the Lord came to lay down His life for His friends (and therefore for him), he should have the confidence to offer his to the Lord, and, ere yet Christ's life was laid down for him, should undertake to lay down his life for Christ!

^f Chrys. in Cat. Luc.

^g Cyril, *ibid.*

^h St. Chrys., St. Matt.

Jesus, therefore, answered, Wilt thou lay down thy life for Me? Wilt thou do for Me what I have not yet done for thee? Canst thou lead the way, who canst not follow? Why takest thou so much upon thyself? What thinkest thou of thyself? What conceitest thou thyself to be? Hear what thou art: "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, the cock shall not crow, until thou thrice deny Me." Behold in what sort thou shalt full soon appear unto thyself, thou who speakest great things of thyself, and knowest not thyself to be little. Thou who promisest Me thy death, shalt thrice deny thy Life¹; thou who now thinkest thou canst die for Me, first live for thyself, for in fearing the death of thy flesh, thou wilt give the death of thy soul. For how great life it is to confess Christ, so great death is it to deny Christ².

Peter presumed on something which not yet was in him,—that even unto death he would persevere with the Lord Jesus Christ. His own powers Peter knew not, but the Lord knew. That he was not fitted for this, He who had formed him, replied: He who would give meet powers to him whom he had formed, knew what he had not yet given; he who had not yet received them, knew it not. Then came temptation; he denied, he wept, he received. Seeing that we neither know what we should ask, as not having, nor for what we should give thanks as having received, need is there alway in this world that we be educated by temptations and tribulations¹.

The more Christ warned him, so much the more did Peter exceedingly oppose Him. What mean these things, oh, Peter? When He was saying, "One of you shall betray Me," thou didst fear lest thou shouldst be the traitor, though conscious to thyself of no such thing; but now, when He plainly declares, "all

¹ See note c, p. 366.

² St. Aug. Hom. lxvi. in St. John.

¹ St. Aug., Ps. iii. 56.

shall be offended," dost thou gainsay it, and not once only, but twice, and often?

Whence, then, did this come to him? From much love, from much pleasure. I mean, that after he was delivered from that distressing fear about the betrayal, he then spoke confidently, and lifted up himself above the rest, saying, "though all shall be offended, yet will not I be offended." In some degree, too, his conduct sprang from jealousy; for at the Supper they reasoned which of them is the greatest. Therefore Christ checked him, not compelling him to the denial, God forbid! but leaving him destitute of His help, and convicting human nature of its own weakness.

And see how after these things he was subdued. For after the Resurrection, when he had said, "and what shall this man do^m?" and was silenced, he ventured no more to gainsay, as here, but held his peace. Again, toward the Assumption, when he hears, "It is not for you to know the times and the seasonsⁿ," he holds his peace, and contradicts not. After these things, when he hears a voice saying to him, "What God hath cleansed, call not thou common^o," even though he knew not then what these words meant, he is quiet and resists not.

All these things did that fall effect; and whereas before that he attributes all to himself, saying, "though all men shall be offended, yet will not I be offended;" and, "If I should die, I will not deny Thee," (when he should have said, If I receive the assistance from Thee); yet, after these things all is reversed, he says, "Why look ye so earnestly on us, as though by our own power, or holiness, we had made this man to walk^p?"

Hence we learn a great doctrine,—that a man's willingness is not sufficient, unless he receive succour from above; and again, that we shall gain nothing by the succour from above, if there be not a willing-

^m St. John xxi. 21.

ⁿ Acts i. 7.

^o Ibid. x. 15.

^p Ibid. iii. 12.

ness on our part. And these two things do Judas and Peter shew ; for the one, though he had received much help, was profited nothing, because he was not willing, neither contributed his part ; and the other, though he was ready in mind, yet fell, because he received no assistance. For, indeed, of these two things—of the grace of God and the willingness of man—is the web of virtue woven.

Wherefore, I entreat you neither, when you have cast all upon God, to sleep yourselves ; nor, when labouring earnestly, to think to accomplish all by your own toils. For neither is it the will of God that we should be supine ourselves, therefore He worketh not all Himself ; nor that we should be boasters, therefore He doth not give all power to us ; but having removed what was hurtful in either way, He leaves that which is useful for us. Therefore He suffered even the chief Apostle to fall, both rendering him more humble in mind, and training him thenceforth to greater love ; “ For to whom much is forgiven,” it is said, “ he loveth more ⁹. ”

The Agony.

Many are shocked at this recital, who turn the sorrows of the Saviour into an argument of weakness inherent from the beginning, rather than taken upon Him for the time. But I am so far from considering it a thing which requires excuse, that I never more admire His mercy and His majesty ; for He would have conferred less upon me had He not taken upon Him my feelings. For He took upon Him my sorrow, that upon me He might bestow His joy. With confidence, therefore, I name His sadness, because I preach His Cross. He must needs, then, have undergone affliction, that He might conquer. He willed to instruct us how we should conquer death, and what is far greater, the anguish of coming death. Thou smartedst, then, O Lord, not from Thine own, but from my wounds ; for,

⁹ St. Chrys. on St. Matt.

“He was wounded for our transgressions^r.” And perhaps He is sad, because, that after Adam’s fall, the passage by which we must depart from this world was such that death was necessary. Nor is it far from the truth to say also that He was sad for His persecutors, who He knew would suffer punishment for their wicked sacrilege^s.

Watch and pray, lest ye enter into temptation. He that defendeth prayeth, and shall not he pray who is in peril^t?

Judas betrays his Master with a kiss.

If it be asked why Judas betrayed Jesus with a kiss, according to some it was because he desired to keep up the reverence due to his Master, and did not dare to make an open assault upon Him; according to others, it was out of fear that if he came as an avowed enemy, he might be the cause of His escape, which he believed Jesus had it in His power to effect. But I think that all betrayers of truth love to assume the guise of truth, and to use the sign of a kiss. Like Judas also, all heretics call Jesus Master, and receive from Him mild answer^u.

Consider how indignant thou art against the traitor, against them that crucified Him. Look, therefore, lest thou also thyself become guilty of the Body and Blood of Christ. They slaughtered the all-holy body, but thou, after such great benefits, receivest It in a filthy soul. For neither was it enough for Him to be made man, to be smitten and slaughtered, but He also commingleth Himself with us, and not by faith only, but also in very deed maketh us His Body. What, then, ought not he to exceed in purity that hath the benefit of this sacrifice? Than what sunbeam should not that hand be more pure which is to sever this Flesh, the mouth that is filled with spiritual fire, the tongue that is reddened by that most awful Blood? Consider with what sort of honour thou wast honoured, of what sort

^r Isa. liii. 5.

^s St. Aug., Ser. lxxv.

^t St. Ambrose, in Cat. on St. Luke.

^u Origen, in Cat. on St. Matt.

of Table thou art partaking. That which when angels behold, they tremble, and dare not so much as look up at It without awe, on account of the Brightness that cometh thence,—with this we are fed, with this we are commingled, and we are made one body and one flesh with Christ.

Mark it, He was born of our substance; and if He came unto our nature, it is quite plain that it was to all; and if to all, then to each one. And how was it, you say, that all did not reap the profit therefrom? This was not of His doing, Whose choice it was to do this in behalf of all, but the fault of them that were not willing.

With each one of the faithful doth He mingle Himself in the Mysteries, and whom He begat, He nourishes by Himself, and putteth not out to another; by this also persuading thee again, that He had taken thy flesh. Let us not then be remiss, having been counted worthy of so much love and honour. See ye not the infants, with how much eagerness they lay hold of the breast? With the like let us approach this Table; or rather, with much more eagerness let us, as infants at the breast, draw out the grace of the Spirit, let it be our one sorrow not to partake of this Food. The works set before us are not of man's power. He that then did these things at that Supper, This Same now also works them. We occupy the place of servants. He who sanctifieth and changeth them is the same. Let, then, no Judas be present, no covetous man. If any one be not a disciple, let him withdraw, the Table receives not such. For, "I keep the Passover," He saith, "with My disciples^x."

This Table is the same as That, and hath nothing less. For it is not so that Christ wrought that and man this, but He doth this too. This is the upper chamber, where they were then; and hence they went forth unto the Mount of Olives^y.

^x St. Matt. xxviii. 18.

^y St. Chrysostom, Hom. in St. Matt.

THURSDAY BEFORE EASTER.

THE EPISTLE.

1 COR. xi. 17—34.

“In this that I declare unto you, I praise you not,” &c.

In this that I declare unto you, I praise you not ; that ye come together not for the better, but for the worse.

It is necessary in considering this charge, to state first the occasion of it.

As in the case of the three thousand who believed in the beginning, all had eaten their meals in common, and had all things common, so also was it at the time when the Apostle wrote. Not, indeed, exactly ; but, as it were, a certain outflowing of that communion had descended to them that came after. And because some were poor and others rich, they laid not down all their goods in the midst, but, as it should seem, made the tables open on stated days, and, when the solemn service was completed, after the communion of the Mysteries, they all went to a common entertainment, the rich bringing their provisions with them, and the poor and destitute being invited by them, and all feasting in common^a. But afterwards this custom became cor-

^a Tertullian (in his “Apology,” written probably A.D. 198,) says : “ Our feast sheweth its nature in its name. It is named by the word which among the Greeks signifies ‘love.’ Whatever expense it costeth, expense incurred in the name of piety is a gain ; if we aid every poor man by this refreshment, not according as the parasites among you, aspire to the glory of enslaving their liberty, and for their hire, filling their bellies in the midst of insults, but, according as with God, more thought is taken for men of low degree. If the cause

rupted. And the reason was, the Corinthians were divided, and were addicting themselves some to this party and others to that, as Paul had said in the beginning of the Epistle, "It hath been declared to me of you, my brethren, . . . that there are contentions among you. . . . Every one of you saith, I am of Paul; and I of Apollos; and I of Cephas^b."

Since, therefore, this custom was broken through, a custom most excellent and most useful, and he saw the great advantages accruing therefrom in a way to be destroyed, Paul naturally addresses them with severity, saying,

Now in this that I declare unto you, I praise you not; that ye come together not for the better, but for the worse, i.e. because ye do not make progress in virtue. For it were meet that your liberality should increase and become manifold; but ye have rather taken from the custom which already prevailed.

Further, that he might not seem to say these things on account of the poor only, he doth not at once strike into the discourse concerning the tables, but saith,

For first of all, when ye come together in the church, I hear that there be divisions among you, and I partly believe it. For there must be also heresies among you, that they who are approved may be made manifest.

By heresies, here, he means not those which concern the great doctrines, but these present divisions, as he shews by going on to say, *Every one taketh before other his own supper*, and so on. Had they been schisms of doctrine he would not have discoursed with them thus mildly; for in speaking of these he is vehement both

of the feast be good, judge ye what the rest of the course of our rules is according to the duties of religion. It alloweth nothing vile, nothing immodest. Men sit not down to meat before tasting, in the first place, of prayer to God. They eat as much as hungry men desire, they drink as much as is profitable for chaste men; they are so filled, as men who remember that during the night also they must pray to God; they so discourse, as those who know that God hear-eth."—*Apology*, i. 39.

^b 1 Cor. i. 11, 12.

in assertion and in reproof, but here he speaks in a gentle and subdued tone.

And he gives no handle to objectors, by saying, *there must be heresies, that they which are approved, &c.*, for the word *that* does not always indicate the cause, but frequently also the event. Thus Christ Himself uses it, when He saith, "For judgment I am come into this world, that they which see not might see; and that they which see might be made blind^c." So likewise Paul: "The law entered, that the offence might abound^d." Not, then, with this view came heresies into being, in order that they which are approved might be made manifest, but on these heresies taking place such was the result^e.

Then he adds the specific form of the Corinthians' offence: *When ye come together into one place, this is not to eat the Lord's Supper.*

See how he appeals to their sense of shame, as if he said, "The appearance of your assembly is that of love and brotherly affection; at least one place receives you all, and ye are together in one flock. But the Banquet, when you come to that, bears no resemblance to the assembly of worshippers." And he saith not, "When ye come together, this is not to eat in common," "this not to feast with one another;" but otherwise, and much more fearfully he reprimands them, saying, *this is not to eat the Lord's Supper*, sending them away now from this point to that evening on which Christ delivered the awful Mysteries. For that Supper, too, had them all reclining at meat together; yet surely not so great is the distance between the rich and the poor now as between the Teacher and the disciples then. Think of the interval between the Teacher and the traitor; nevertheless, the Lord Himself sat at meat with them all, and did not even cast

^c St. John ix. 39.

^d Rom. v. 20.

^e See St. Chrysostom on "It must needs be that offences come," in the Gospel for St. Michael and All Angels.

him out, but both gave him his portion of salt, and made him partaker of the Mysteries.

Next, he explains how this is not to eat the Lord's Supper.

For in [your] eating every one taketh before other his own supper.

Perceivest thou how he intimates that they were disgracing themselves? For that which is the Lord's they make a private matter. The Lord's Supper, i.e. the Master's, ought to be common. For the property of the Master belongs not to this servant without belonging to that, but in common to all. But now thou dost not suffer it to be the Lord's, not suffering it to be common, but feasting by thyself.

And one is hungry, and another is drunken.

See a second fault whereby these same persons are injured: the first fault is that they dishonour their supper; the second, that they are greedy and drunken, and what is yet worse, even when the poor are hungry. For what was intended to be set before all in common, that these men fed on alone, and proceeded to surfeiting and to drunkenness.

Next, having pointed out their profaneness, he adds his reprimand, saying with much anger,—

What, have ye not houses to eat and to drink in? or despise ye the Church of God?

Seest thou how he transfers the charge from the indignity offered to the poor, to that offered to the Church, that his words may make a deeper impression? Here is put a fourth accusation, that not the poor only, but the Church likewise is insulted. For even as thou makest the Lord's Supper a private meal, so also thou usest the Church as a private house. For it was made a Church, not that we who come together might be divided, but that they who are divided might be united; and this the act of assembling shews.

And shame them that have not? . . . shall I praise you in this? I praise you not.

Behold a fifth accusation, that not only they overlook the poor, but even shame them.

Next, wishing from another topic to shame them still more, he takes again the points which were most essential, and of them weaves his discourse.

For I have received of the Lord, saith he, that which also I delivered unto you, That the Lord Jesus, the same night in which He was betrayed, took bread; and when He had given thanks, He brake it, and said, Take, eat; this is My Body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of Me.

Wherefore doth he here make mention of the Mysteries? Because that argument was necessary to his present purpose. As thus: "Thy Master," saith he, "counted all worthy of the same table, though it be very and most exceedingly awful, and far exceeding the dignity of any; but thou considerest the poor to be unworthy even of thine own, small and mean as we see it is; and while they have no advantage over thee in spiritual things, thou robbest them in the temporal things; for these things are not thine own.

And wherefore doth he remind us of the time, and of that evening, and of the betrayal? Not without a reason, but that he might fill us with compunction. For even if we were very stones, yet when we consider that night, how He was with His disciples "very heavy," how He was betrayed, how He was bound, how He was led away, how He was judged, how He suffered all things, we must become softened, and be withdrawn from the earth and all the pomp of this world. Therefore Paul leads us to the remembrance of all those things, putting us to shame, and saying, "My Master gave up even Himself for thy sake, and thou dost not even share a little meat with thy brother for thine own sake."

But how saith Paul that *he received it from the Lord*? since certainly he was not present then, but was one of the persecutors. That thou mayest know that the

first table had no advantage above that which cometh after it. For even to-day also it is He who doeth all, and delivereth it even as then.

Next, he proceeds to recount the things that were done, saying,

He took bread; and when He had given thanks, He brake it, and said, Take, eat; this is My Body, which is broken for you. If, therefore, thou comest for a Sacrifice of thanksgiving¹, do thou on thy part nothing unworthy of that Sacrifice; by no means either dishonour thy brother, or neglect him in his hunger; be not drunken; insult not the Church.

As thou comest, giving thanks for what thou hast enjoyed, so do thou thyself make return, and not cut thyself off from thy neighbour. Christ gave Himself equally to all, saying, *Take, eat*; but thou dost not give so much as the common bread equally.

After the same manner also He took the cup, when He had supped, saying, This cup is the New Testament in My Blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of Me.

What! art thou making a remembrance of Christ, and despisest thou the poor and tremblest not? Why, if a son or a brother had died and thou wert making

¹ Hitherto St. Chrysostom seems to have spoken of the "love-feast" only as "the Lord's Supper," now he appears to speak of it in combination with the Holy Eucharist.

Waterland, writing on the words, "the Lord's Supper," says: "... I incline rather to those, both ancients and moderns, who interpret that place [1 Cor. xi. 20] of the *love-feast*, kept in imitation of our Lord's *last Supper*, which was *previous* to the original Eucharist. Thus much, however, is certain, that in the Apostolical times, the *love-feast* and the *Eucharist*, though distinct, went together, and were nearly allied to each other, and were both of them celebrated at one meeting. Without some such supposition, it was next to impossible to account for St. Paul's quick transition, in that chapter, from one to the other. Whether, therefore, *Lord's Supper* in that chapter signifies the *love-feast* only, or the *Eucharist* only, or *both together*, one thing is clear and unquestionable, that they were both but different parts of the same solemnity, or different acts of the same meeting."

a remembrance of him, thou wouldst have been conscience-stricken hadst thou not fulfilled the custom and invited the poor.

But what is this which He saith, *This cup is the New Testament?* There was also a cup of the Old Testament, the libations and blood of the brute creatures. For after sacrificing, they used to receive the blood in a chalice and bowl, and so pour it out. Since then, instead of the blood of beasts, He brought in His own Blood: lest any should be troubled on hearing this, He reminds them of that ancient sacrifice.

Next, having spoken concerning that Supper, he connects the things present with the things of that time, that even as on that very evening, and reclining on that very couch, and receiving from Christ Himself this sacrifice, so also now might men be affected, and he saith,

For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew forth the Lord's death till He come.

For as Christ, in regard to the bread and cup, said, *Do this in remembrance of Me*, revealing to us the cause of the giving of the mystery, and besides what else He said, declaring this to be a sufficient cause to ground our religious fear upon; so also Paul saith here, *as often as ye eat this bread and drink this cup, ye do shew His death.* Then intimating that it abides unto the end, he saith, *till He come.*

Wherefore, whosoever shall eat this bread, and drink this cup of the Lord, unworthily, shall be guilty of the Body and Blood of the Lord.

Why so? Because he hath poured it out, and makes the thing appear a slaughter, and no longer a sacrifice. Much, therefore, as they who then pierced Him, pierced Him not that they might drink, but that they might shed His Blood: so, likewise, doth he that cometh for it unworthily, and reaps no profit thereby. And how can it be other than unworthily that he partakes who neglects the hungry? who, besides overlooking such an one, also puts him to shame.

But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup.

What mean these words when another subject is under discussion? It is Paul's custom not to confine himself to those things which he had proposed to himself, but if an argument, incidental to his purpose, occur, to proceed upon this, and especially when it relates to any necessary or urgent matter. This he hath done here, in that having found occasion to remind them of the Mysteries, he hath judged it necessary to proceed with that subject. For indeed it was no ordinary one. Wherefore also he discoursed very awfully concerning it, providing for that which is the sum of all good things, viz., their approaching those Mysteries with a pure conscience. Wherefore neither was he content with what was already said, but adds this also, saying,

But let a man examine himself; as also he saith elsewhere, "prove your own selves, examine yourselves"; not as we do now, approaching because of the season rather than from any earnestness of mind. For we do not consider how we may approach prepared, with the ills that were within us purged out, but rather how we may come at festivals, and whenever all do so. But not thus did Paul bid us come; he knoweth only one season of access and communion, the purity of a man's conscience. Since, if even that banquet, which the senses take cognizance of, cannot be partaken of by us when feverish and full of bad humours, without risk of perishing; much more is it unlawful for us to touch this Table with profane lusts, which are more grievous than fevers. Now when I say profane lusts, I mean both the desires of the body, and of money, and of anger, and of malice, and, in a word, all that is profane. And it becomes him that approaches, first to empty himself of all these things, and so to touch that pure sacrifice.

And Paul bids not one examine another, but each an himself, making the tribunal not a public one, and the conviction without a witness.

For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself.

What sayest thou? Is this Table, which is the cause so many blessings, and teeming with life, become condemnation? Not from its own nature, saith Paul, but from the will of him that approaches. For as His presence, which conveyed those great and unutterable blessings, condemned the more them that received Him not; so, also, the Mysteries become provisions of greater punishment to such as partake unworthily.

But why doth he eat condemnation to himself?

Not discerning the Lord's Body, i.e. not searching, not bearing in mind as he ought the greatness of the things set before him, not estimating the worth of the gift. Or if thou shouldest come to know accurately Who is that lies before thee, and Who He is that gives Himself, and to whom, thou wilt need no other argument; but this is enough to make thee use all vigilance, unless thou shouldest be altogether fallen.

For this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep.

That he may not seem to be speaking mere words, when he saith, *he eateth condemnation to himself*, and *is guilty*, he points to facts, and calls themselves to witness; and to the questions, "whence arise the unnumbered deaths? whence the long diseases of men?" He answers that these events are many of them conditional upon certain sins. What, then? They who are in continual health, and come to a green old age, do they not sin? Nay, who durst say this? they suffer not punishment here, because they shall suffer more severely hereafter. But we, if we would, either here nor hereafter need suffer it.

For if we would judge ourselves, saith he, *we should not be judged.*

He saith not, "if we would punish ourselves, if we would be revenged on ourselves," but only, if we were willing to acknowledge our offences, to pass sentence on ourselves, to condemn the things done amiss, we should be rid of the punishment both in this world and the next. For he that condemns himself, propitiates God in two ways, both by acknowledging his sins, and by being more on his guard for the future.

But though we are not willing to do even this light thing as we ought to do it, not even thus doth the Lord resolve to punish us with the world; but still spareth us, exacting punishment in this world, where the penalty is but for a season, and the consolation great, for the result is both deliverance from sins and a good hope of things to come, alleviating the present evils; wherefore Paul saith,

But now, when we are judged, we are chastened of the Lord, that we should not be condemned with the world.

He saith not, we are punished,—we have vengeance taken on us,—but, *we are chastened*. For what is done belongs rather to admonition than condemnation, to healing than vengeance, to correction than punishment. And besides this, by the threat of a greater evil he shews the present to be light, saying, *that we may not be condemned with the world*. He brings in hell and the tremendous Judgment-seat, and signifies that that trial and punishment is necessary and must be. For if the faithful, and such as God especially cares for, escape not without punishment in whatsoever things they offend (and this is evident from what we see daily), much more will the unbelieving suffer, and they who commit unpardonable and incurable sins.

Wherefore, my brethren, when ye come together to eat, tarry one for another.

While fear is at its height, and the terror of hell present, Paul chooses the moment to return to the exhortation on behalf of the poor, the occasion of his

saying all these things; and again implying that if they do not this, they must partake unworthily.

And if any man hunger, let him eat at home; that ye come not together unto condemnation.

By permitting he hinders, and more strongly than by absolute prohibition. For he brings the offender out of the church and sends him to his house, as a slave to the belly, and not able to control himself; and he adds, *that ye come not together unto condemnation*; as if he said, "Ye come together that ye may love one another, that ye may profit and be profited; but if the contrary happen, it were better for you to feed yourselves at home ^b."

1. This teaching of the blessed Paul is alone sufficient to give you full assurance concerning those Divine Mysteries, which when ye are vouchsafed, ye are of the same body and blood with Christ. For he has just distinctly said, *That our Lord Jesus Christ, the same night in which He was betrayed, took bread; and when He had given thanks, He brake it, and said, Take, eat, this is My Body. And having taken the cup, and given thanks, He said, Take, drink, this is My Blood.* Since, then, He Himself has declared, and said of the bread, *This is My Body*, who shall dare to doubt any longer? and since He has affirmed and said, *This is My Blood*, who shall ever hesitate, saying that it is not His Blood?

3. Therefore with fullest assurance let us partake as of the Body and Blood of Christ; for in the figure of bread is given to thee His Body, and in the figure of wine His Blood, that thou by partaking of the Body and Blood of Christ, mightest be made of the same body and the same blood with Him. For thus we come to bear Christ in us, because His Body and Blood

^b St. Chrysostom, Hom. in loc.

are diffused through our members; thus it is that, according to the blessed Peter, "we become partakers of the divine nature¹."

4. Christ, on a certain occasion discoursing with the Jews, said: "Except ye eat My Flesh, and drink My Blood, ye have no life in you²." They, not receiving His saying spiritually, were offended, and went backward, supposing that He was inviting them to eat flesh.

5. Even under the Old Testament there was shewbread; but this, as it belonged to the Old Testament, came to an end; but in the New Testament there is the Bread of heaven, and the Cup of salvation, sanctifying soul and body; for as the bread has respect to our body, so is the Word appropriate to our soul.

6. Contemplate, therefore, the bread and wine not as bare elements, for they are, according to the Lord's declaration, the Body and Blood of Christ; for though sense suggests this to thee, let faith stablish thee. Judge not the matter from taste, but from faith be fully assured without misgiving, that thou hast been vouchsafed the Body and Blood of Christ¹.

Awful in truth are the Mysteries of the Church, awful in truth is the Altar. A fountain went up out of Paradise sending forth material rivers; from this table springeth up a fountain which sendeth forth rivers spiritual. By the side of this fountain are planted not fruitless willows, but trees reaching even unto heaven, bearing fruit ever timely and undecaying. If any be scorched with heat, let him come to the side of this fountain and cool his burning. For it quencheth drought and comforteth all things that are burnt up, not by the sun, but by fiery darts: for it hath its beginnings from above, and its source is there, whence also its water floweth. Many are the streams of that fountain which the Comforter sendeth forth, and the

¹ 2 Pet. i. 4.

² See St. John vi. 53.

¹ St. Cyril,

Catechetical Lectures, xxii.

Son is the Mediator, not holding mattock to clear the way, but opening our minds. This fountain is a fountain of light, spouting forth rays of truth. This blood was ever typified of old in the altars and sacrifices of righteous men ; this is the price of the world, by this Christ purchased to Himself the Church, by this He hath adorned her. For as a man buying slaves giveth gold for them, and again, when he desireth to deck them out doth this also with gold ; so Christ hath purchased us with His Blood, and adorned us with His Blood. They who share this Blood stand with Angels and Archangels and the Powers that are above, clothed in Christ's own kingly robe, and having the armour of the Spirit. Nay, I have not as yet said any great thing ; they are clothed with the King Himself.

Now as this is a great and wonderful thing, so if thou approach it with pureness, thou approachest for salvation ; but if with an evil conscience, for punishment and vengeance. "For," It saith, "he that eateth and drinketh unworthily" of the Lord, "eateth and drinketh damnation to himself^m." Since, if they who defile the kingly purple are punished equally with those who rend it, it is not unreasonable that they who receive the Body with unclean thoughts should suffer the same punishment as those who rent it with the nails. Observe, at least, how fearful a punishment Paul declareth, when he saith, "He that despised Moses' law died without mercy under two or three witnesses ; of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the Blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thingⁿ?" Take we then heed to ourselves, beloved, we who enjoy such blessings ; and if we desire to utter any shameful word, or perceive ourselves

^m 1 Cor. ii. 29.ⁿ Heb. i. 28.

hurried away by wrath or any like passion, let us consider of what things we have been deemed worthy, of how great a Spirit we have partaken, and this consideration shall be a sobering of our unreasonable passions. For how long shall we be nailed to present things? How long shall it be before we rouse ourselves? How long shall we neglect our own salvation? Let us bear in mind of what things Christ has deemed us worthy; let us give thanks, let us glorify Him, not by our faith alone, but also by our very works, that we may obtain the good things that are to come, through the grace and loving-kindness of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom and with whom, to the Father and the Holy Ghost, be glory now and ever, and world without end. Amen °.

THE GOSPEL.

ST. LUKE xxiii. 1—49.

EVERY deed of Christ is a boast of the Catholic Church, but her boast of boasts is the Cross; and knowing this, Paul says, "But God forbid that I should glory save in the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ^p." For wondrous indeed it was, that he who was blind from his birth should recover his sight in Siloam; but what is this compared with the blind of the whole world? Marvellous it was that five loaves should issue forth into food for the five thousand; but what is that to those who are famishing in ignorance through all the world? It was marvellous that she should have been loosed who had been bound by Satan eighteen years; yet what is this to all of us, who are fast bound in the chain of our sins? Now the glory of the Cross has led into light those who were blind through igno-

° St. Chrysostom on St. John vi.

^p Gal. vi. 14.

ance, has loosed all who were held fast by sin, and as ransomed the whole world of men.

And wonder not that the whole world was ransomed ; for it was no mere man, but the only-begotten Son of God, who died on its behalf. And yet one man's sin, even Adam's, had power to bring death to the world ; 'But if by one man's offence death reigned over the world, how shall not life much rather reign by the righteousness of One^a?' And if because of the tree of food they were thus cast out of Paradise, shall not believers now, because of the Tree of Jesus, much more easily enter into Paradise ? If the first man formed out of the earth brought in universal death, shall not He who formed him bring in everlasting life, being Himself Life^r ? If Phinees, when he waxed zealous and slew the evil doer, stopped the wrath of God, shall not Jesus, who slew not another, but gave Himself a ransom for all^s, put away the wrath which is against men ?

Let us then not be ashamed of the Cross of our Saviour, but rather glory in it. For the preaching of the Cross is "unto the Jews a stumbling-block, and unto the Greeks foolishness," "to them that perish [it is] foolishness, but unto us which are saved it is the power of God^t." For it was not a mere man who died for us, as I said before, but the Son of God,—God made man. Further ; if under Moses a lamb kept the destroyer at a distance, did not much rather the "Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world^u," deliver us from our sins ? The blood of a brute animal gave salvation ; and shall not the Blood of the Only-begotten much rather save ? If any disbelieve the power of the Crucified, let him enquire of the devils ; if any believe not words, let him believe what he sees. Many have been crucified throughout the world, but by none of these are the devils scared ; but Christ having been crucified for us, when they see

^a Rom. v. 17, 18.

^r St. John xiv. 6.

^s 1 Tim. ii. 6.

^t 1 Cor. i. 23, 18.

^u St. John i. 29.

but the sign of the Cross, they shudder. He died for their own sins, but Christ for the sins of for, "He did no sin, neither was guile found in His mouth^x." It is not Peter who says this, but it is Esaias who says it, not indeed present Him in the flesh, but in the Spirit contemplating time His coming in the flesh. Yet why bring the Prophet only as a witness? receive the witness of Pilate himself, who gave sentence upon Him, *I find no fault in this Man^y*: and who, when he laid Him up, washed his hands, and said, "I am innocent of the blood of this just person^z." There is another witness of the sinlessness of Jesus,—the first man admitted into Paradise; who rebuked the fellow, and said, *We receive the due reward of our labours, but this Man hath done nothing amiss^a*; for we were sent, both thou and I, at His judgment.

Being, then, in the flesh like others, He was tempted, but not for like sins. He sinned not in word or deed, or thought; "Who did no sin, neither was guile found in His mouth: Who, when He was reviled, He reviled not again; when He suffered, He threatened not^b;" who came to His Passion, not unwillingly; yea, should any dissuade Him from it now, "Be it far from Thee, Lord," He will say "Get thee behind Me, Satan^c."

And wouldest thou be persuaded that He came to His Passion willingly? Others die without their will, in that they know not of their death; but He spoke before of His Passion: "Behold the Son of Man is betrayed to be crucified^d."

Knowest thou wherefore this Friend of man came to death? It was lest the whole world should be saved in its sins. "Behold, we go up to Jerusalem,

^x 1 Pet. ii. 22, from Isa. liii. 9.

^y St. Luke :

^z St. Matt. xxvii. 24.

^a St. Luke xxiii. 41.

^b 1 Pet. :

^c St. Matt. xvi. 22, 23.

^d Ibid. xxvi. 2.

of Man shall be betrayed, and shall be crucified^e;" again, "He stedfastly set His face to go to Jerusalem^f." And wouldest thou know certainly that the Cross is a glory to Jesus? Hear His own words, not me. Judas set about betraying Him, being ungrateful to the Master of the house. Having but just gone forth from His table, and drunk His cup of blessing, yet in return for that draught of salvation sought to shed righteous blood. He who did eat His bread lifted up his heel against Him^g; his hands were but lately receiving the blessed gifts, and within a little while, for the wages of treason, he was plotting His death. And being reprov'd, and having heard that word, "Thou hast said^h," he still went on. Then said Jesus, "The hour is come, that the Son of Man should be glorifiedⁱ." Thou seest how He knew the Cross to be His proper glory. Further, when Esaias when he was sawn asunder not ashamed, shall Christ be ashamed when dying for the world? "Now is the Son of Man glorified^k." Not that He had glory before; for He was "glorified in the glory" which was before the foundation of the world^l. He was ever glorified as God; but now He glorified in bearing the crown of His patience. He gave not up His life by force, nor was He put to death violently, but of His own accord. Hear what He says: "I have power to lay it down (My life), and have power to take it again^m." I yield it of My own choice to My enemies; for unless I chose, this would not be. He came therefore of His own set purpose to His Passion, rejoicing in His noble deed, smiling at the crown, cheered by the salvation of men; not ashamed of the Cross, for it saved the world. For it was no common man who suffered, but God in man's attire, striving for the prize of His patience.

St. Matt. xx. 18.
St. Matt. xxvi. 25.
St. Luke x. 17.

^f St. Luke ix. 51.
ⁱ St. John xii. 23.
^m Ibid. x. 18.

^g Ps. xli. 9.
^k Ibid. xiii. 31.

But the Jews contradict, ever ready, as they are, to cavil, and backward to believe; so that for this cause the Prophet in the text says, "Lord, who hath believed our report ⁿ?" Persians believe, and Hebrews believe not. "To whom He was not spoken of, they shall see: and they that have not heard shall understand ^o," while they who study these things shall set at nought what they study. They speak against us, and say, "does the Lord then suffer? what? had men's hands power over His sovereignty?" Read the Lamentations; for in those Lamentations, Jeremias, lamenting you, has written what is worthy of lamentation. He saw your destruction, he beheld your downfall, he bewailed Jerusalem which then was; for that "which now is" shall not be lamented for; for that Jerusalem crucified Christ, but that "which now is ^p" worships Him. Lamenting, then, he says, "The breath of our countenance, the Lord Christ, was taken in our corruptions ^q." Am I setting forth views of my own? Behold he testifies of the Lord Christ seized by men. And what follows from this? Tell me, O Prophet. He says, "Of whom we said, Under His shadow we shall live among the heathen ^r." For he correctly signifies that the grace of life shall no longer dwell in Israel, but among the heathen.

But since their gainsayings are many, come, let me, with the help of your prayers (as the shortness of time may allow), set forth through the Lord's grace some few testimonies concerning the Passion. For all things concerning Christ are put into writing, and nothing is doubtful, for nothing is without a text. All things are inscribed on the monuments of the Prophets; clearly written, not on tablets of stone, but by the hand of the Holy Ghost.

Let us then seek for the texts in proof of the Passion of Christ. I begin from whence the Passion

ⁿ Isa. liii. 1.

^o Rom. xv. 20.

^p Gal. iv. 25.

^q Lam. iv. 20, Sept.

^r Ibid.

began. Judas was the traitor who came against Him, speaking words of peace, but plotting war. The Psalmist, then, says concerning him, "My lovers and My friends stand aloof from My sore: and My kinsmen stand afar off^s." And again; "The words of his mouth were smoother than butter, but war was in his heart: his words were softer than oil, yet were they drawn swords^t." "Hail, Master," and he betrayed his Master to death; he was not moved with His warning, when He said, "Judas, betrayest thou the Son of Man with a kiss?" "Hold not Thy peace, O God of My praise; for the mouth of the wicked and the mouth of the deceitful are opened against Me: they have spoken against Me with a lying tongue. They compassed Me about also with words of hatred^u." That some of the chief priests also were present, and that the bands were before the gate of the city, thou hast heard before, if thou rememberest the exposition of the Psalmist, who has told the time and the place: "They return at evening: they make a noise like a dog, and go round about the city^x."

Attend also in respect to the thirty pieces of silver: "And I will say to them, If ye think good, give me my price; and if not, forbear^y," and the rest. One price is owing to Me from you for My healing the blind and the lame, and I receive another; for thanksgiving I receive dishonour, for worship, insult. Beholdest thou how the Scripture foresaw these things? "So they weighed for My price thirty pieces of silver^z." How exact the prophecy! how great and unerring is the wisdom of the Holy Ghost! For he said not ten, nor twenty, but thirty, exactly as many as there were. Tell also what became of this value, O Prophet! Does he who received it keep it? or does he restore it? and after it was restored, what becomes of it? The Prophet then says, "And I took the thirty pieces of silver,

^s Ps. xxxviii. 11.

^x Ibid. lix. 6.

^t Ibid. lv. 21.

^y Zech. xi. 12.

^u Ibid. cix. 1—3.

^z Ibid.

and cast them into the house of the Lord, into the refining house ^a.”

And the High-Priest having questioned Him, and heard the truth, is wroth; and the wicked minister of wicked men smote Him; and the countenance, which had shone as the sun, endured to be smitten by lawless hands; others coming spat on the face of Him, who by His spittle had healed one who was blind from his birth. “Do ye thus requite the Lord, O foolish people and unwise ^b?” And the prophet wondering, says, “Lord, who hath believed our report ^c?” for the thing is incredible, that God, the Son of God, and the Arm of the Lord, should suffer such things. But that they who are saved ^d may not disbelieve, the Holy Ghost writes before in the person of Christ, who says, (for He who then spake these things was afterwards an actor in them,) “I gave My back to the smiters, and My cheek to them that plucked off the hairs: I hid not My face from shame and spitting ^e,” saying, as it were, “Though knowing before that they will smite Me, I did not even turn My cheek aside; for how should I have nerved My disciples against death for the truth’s sake, had I Myself sunk under this? I said, ‘He who loveth his life shall lose it ^f’; if I had loved My life, how could I have thus taught, not doing what I taught?” First, then, being Himself God, He endured to suffer these things at the hands of men; that after this, we men, when we suffer such things at the hands of men for His sake, might not be ashamed. Thou seest that the prophets have clearly written of these things also. Many, however, of the Scripture testimonies must be passed over for want of time; for if one should exactly search out all, not one of the things concerning Christ would be left without witness.

Look with awe at the Lord while He was judged.

^a Zech. xi. 13, Sept.

^b Dent. xxxii. 6.

^c Isa. liii. 1.

^d Rather, who are “being saved.”

^e Isa. l. 6.

^f St. John xii. 25.

He endured to be led and carried by the soldiers. Pilate sat in judgment, and He who sitteth on the right hand of the Father, stood and was judged. The people whom He had redeemed from the land of Egypt, shouted against Him, "Away with Him, away with Him, crucify Him." Wherefore, O ye Jews? Because He has healed your blind? or because He has made your lame to walk, and bestowed His other benefits? The Prophet in amazement speaks of this, too: "Against whom do ye sport yourselves? against whom make ye a wide mouth, and draw out the tongue?" And the Lord Himself says in the Prophets, "Mine heritage is unto Me as a lion in the forest; it crieth out against Me: therefore have I hated it^h." I have not refused them, but they have refused Me; wherefore it follows that I say, "I have forsaken Mine houseⁱ."

When He was judged He held His peace. The Psalmist says, "I was as a man that heareth not, and in whose mouth are no reproofs^k;" and again, "But I, as a deaf man, heard not; and I was as a dumb man that openeth not his mouth^l."

The soldiers who surrounded Him, mock Him, and their Lord becomes a sport to them, and their Master is turned into jest by them. "When they looked on Me they shook their heads^m." Yet there is the figure of kingly state; for though they mock yet do they bend the knee. And they crucify Him, having first put on Him a purple robe, and they set a crown on His head; for what though it be of thorns? Every king is proclaimed by soldiers; it became Jesus too in a figure, to have been crowned by soldiers; so that for this cause the Scripture says in the Canticles, "Go forth, O ye daughters of Zion, and behold King Solomon in the crown wherewith his mother crowned himⁿ."

^s Isa. lvii. 4.

^k Ps. xxxviii. 14.

^l Cant. iii. 11.

^h Jer. xii. 8.

ⁱ Ibid. ver. 13.

^l Ibid. ver. 7.

^m Ibid. cix. 25.

And the crown itself was a mystery; for it was a remission of sins, a dismissal of the curse.

Adam received the doom, "Cursed is the ground for thy sake; . . . thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee^o." For this cause Jesus assumed the thorns, that He might cancel the doom; for this cause also was He buried in the earth, that the cursed earth might receive instead of a curse, a blessing.

And having touched on things connected with Paradise, I am astonished truly at the truth of the types. In Paradise was the Fall, and in a Garden was our Salvation. From the Tree came sin, and until the Tree sin lasted.

But some one will say to me, "These are views of thine own; shew me from some prophet the wood of the Cross; except thou give me testimony from a prophet I will not be persuaded." Hear now from Jeremias, and assure thyself: "I am as a harmless lamb led to be slaughtered; did I not know it^p?" (for in this manner read it, as a question, as I have read it; for He who said, "Ye know that after two days is the feast of the Passover, and the Son of Man is betrayed to be crucified^q," did He not know?) "I am as a harmless lamb led to be slaughtered; did I not know it?" (But what sort of lamb? let John the Baptist interpret it, when he says, "Behold the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sins of the world^r.") "They have devised against Me a wicked device, saying, 'Let us destroy the tree with the fruits thereof', and let us cut Him off from the land of the living;" (life admits not of destruction, why labour ye for nought?) that "His name be no more remembered." Vain is your

^o Gen. iii. 17, 18.

^p Jer. xi. 19, Sept.

^q St. Matt. xxvi. 2.

^r St. John i. 29.

^s Literally, *with the Bread thereof*.

In the LXX., which St. Cyril quotes, it is, "Come and let us place a beam upon His bread;" and he adds, "And if the Lord reckon thee worthy, thou shalt hereafter know that His Body, according to the Gospel, bore the figure of Bread." "This interpretation is acknowledged by Tertullian, St. Ambrose, and Theodoret."

council; for "before the sun His Name abideth in the Church[†]."

And because it was Life which hung on the Cross, Moses says, weeping, "And thy life shall hang before thine eyes; and thou shalt be afraid day and night, and thou shalt not trust thy life[‡]."

This was wrought in a figure by Moses when he crucified the serpent, that whoso had been bitten by the living serpent, and looked to the brazen serpent, might be saved by believing. Does, then, the brazen serpent save when crucified, and shall not the Son of God Incarnate save when crucified also? Throughout, life comes by means of wood. In the time of Noe the preservation of life was by an ark of wood. In the time of Moses the sea, beholding the emblematical rod, shrunk from him who smote it; is then Moses' rod mighty, and is the Cross of the Saviour powerless? I pass by the greater part of the types to keep within compass. The wood in Moses' case sweetened the water; and from the side of Jesus the water flowed upon the wood. The woman, who was formed from the side, led the way to sin; but Jesus, who came to bestow the grace of pardon on men and women alike, was pierced in the side for women that He might undo the sin.

Now let us return to the proof out of the Prophets, which I spoke of. The Lord was crucified; thou hast received the testimonies. Thou seest this spot of Golgotha[‡]! Thou answerest with a shout of praise, as if assenting. Look to it, lest thou recant it in time of persecution. Rejoice not in the Cross in time of peace only, but hold fast the same faith in time of persecution also; not being a friend of Jesus in time of peace, and His foe in time of war. Thou receivest now the forgiveness of thy sins, and the gifts of the King's spiritual bounty; when war shall come strive thou with

[†] Ps. lxxii. 17, Sept.

[‡] Deut. xxviii. 66, LXX.

[‡] Golgotha. This lecture was spoken in the church there.

high heart for thy King. Jesus, the sinless, for thee was crucified, and wilt not thou be crucified for Him who was crucified for thee? Thou art not bestowing a favour, for thou hast first received; but thou art returning a favour, repaying thy debt to Him who in Golgotha was crucified for thee. Now Golgotha is interpreted, "the place of a skull." Who were they, then, who prophetically named this Golgotha, in which Christ the true Head endured the Cross? As the Apostle says, "Who is the image of the invisible God^r;" and after a little, "and He is the Head of the body, the Church^s." And again, "The Head of every man is Christ^a;" and again, "Who is the Head of all principality and power^b." The Head suffered in "the place of the skull." O wondrous prophetic adaptation! The very name almost reminds thee, saying, "Think not of the Crucified as of a mere man; He is 'the Head of all principality and power.' That Head which was crucified is the Head of all power, and has for His Head the Father; 'For the Head of every man is Christ, and the Head of Christ is God^c.'"

Christ, then, was crucified for us; He was crucified at the third hour; and from the sixth hour there was darkness until the ninth hour; but from the ninth hour there was light again. Are these things then written? Let us enquire. Now the Prophet Zacharias says, "And it shall come to pass in that day, that the light shall not be clear, nor dark: but it shall be one day which shall be known unto the Lord^d." (What, knew he not the other days? Days are many, but "this is the day" of the Lord's patience, "which the Lord made^e,") and that day "shall be known unto the Lord, not day nor night^f." What is this dark saying which the Prophet speaks? That day is neither day nor night. What, then, shall we name it? The Gospel

^r Colos. i. 15.^s Ibid. ver. 18.^a 1 Cor. xi. 3.^b Colos. ii. 10.^c 1 Cor. xi. 3.^d Zech. xiv. 6, 7, LXX.^e Ps. cxviii. 24.^f Ibid.

interprets it by relating the event. It was not day; for the sun shone not uniformly from his rising to his setting, but from the sixth hour till the ninth hour, there was darkness at midday. The darkness, therefore, was in the interval; but God called the darkness night. Wherefore it was neither day nor night; for neither was it all light that it should be day; nor was it all darkness that it should be called night; but after the ninth hour the sun shone forth. This also the Prophet foretels; for after saying, "Not day, nor night," he added, "at evening-time it shall be light^s." Seest thou the exactness of the prophets? Seest thou the truth of the things foretold?

But seekest thou at what hour exactly the sun was darkened? was it the fifth hour, or the eighth, or the tenth? Tell, O Prophet, the certainty thereof to the indocile Jews; when shall the sun go down? The Prophet Amos answers, "And it shall come to pass in that day, saith the Lord God, that I will cause the sun to go down at noon;" (for there was darkness from the sixth hour,) "and I will darken the earth in the clear day^h." What sort of season is this, O Prophet, and what sort of day? "And I will turn your feasts into mourningⁱ;" for this was done in the days of unleavened bread, and at the feast of the Passover: then afterwards he says, "and I will make it as the mourning of an Only Son, and those with Him as a day of anguish^k;" for in the day of unleavened bread, and at the feast, their women mourned and wept, and the Apostles, who had hidden themselves, were in anguish. Wonderful, then, is this prophecy!

But some one will say, "Give me yet another sign; what other plain sign is there in the matter?" Jesus was crucified; and He had but one coat and one cloak. Now His cloak the soldiers shared among themselves,

^s "Theodoret (*in loc.*) gives the same interpretation, St. Jerome (*in loc.*) explains it of the second Advent."

^h Amos viii. 9.

ⁱ Ibid. ver. 10.

^k Ibid. ver. 10, Sept.

having rent it into four; but His coat was not rent, for when rent it would have been no longer of any use; so about this lots were cast by the soldiers; thus the one they divide, but for the other they cast lots. Is, then, this also written? They know, the diligent chanters of the Church, who imitate the Angel hosts, and continually sing praises to God; who are thought worthy to chant Psalms in this Golgotha, and to say, "They part My garments among them, and cast lots upon My vesture¹." The word "lots" expresses the very act of the soldiers.

Again, when He had been judged before Pilate, He was clothed in red; for there they put on Him a purple robe. Is this also written? Esaias saith, "Who is this that cometh from Edom? the redness of His garments is from Bosor^m:" (who is this who for a *dishonour* weareth purple? for Bosor hath in Hebrew this meaning.) "Why are Thy garments red, and Thy raiment as from the trodden wine-pressⁿ?" But he answers and says, "All day long have I stretched forth Mine hands unto a disobedient and gainsaying people^o."

He stretched out His hands on the Cross, that He might encompass the ends of the earth. It is not my word, but it is a prophet who hath said, "Thou hast wrought salvation in the middle of the earth^p." He stretched forth human hands, who by His spiritual hands had established the heaven; and they were fastened with nails, that His manhood which bore the sins of men, having been nailed to the tree, and having died, sin might die with it, and we might rise again in righteousness; "For since by [one] man came death," by One Man also came life^q; by One Man, the Sa-

¹ Ps. xxii. 18; St. John xix. 24.

^m Isa. lxiii. 1, Sept.

ⁿ Ibid. ver. 2.

^o Ibid. lxxv. 2, Sept.

"This passage is interpreted of the Crucifixion by Origen, Jerome, Theodoret, (all in *loc.*) &c., not of course excluding its primary reference to God's Fatherly, all-embracing love."

^p Ps. lxxiv. 12.

^q Rom. v. 12, 17.

viour, dying of His own accord; for remember what He said, "I have power to lay down My life, and I have power to take it again^r."

And concerning the robbers who were crucified with Him, it was written, "And He was numbered with the transgressors^s." Both of them had been transgressors, but one was so no longer. For the one was a transgressor to the end, stubborn against salvation, whose hands indeed were fastened, but who through his blasphemies smote with his tongue. When the Jews passing by wagged their heads, mocking the Crucified, and fulfilling what was written, "When they looked on Me they shook their heads^t," he also reviled with them. But the other rebuked the reviler^u, and to him the end of life was the beginning of restoration; the surrender of his soul was a preventing others in salvation. And after rebuking him, he says, *Lord, remember me*; for to Thee is my speech. Leave this man, for the eyes of his understanding are blinded, but remember me; I say not, remember my works, for of these I am afraid: remember me Thy fellow-wayfarer; I say not, remember me now, but, *when Thou comest into Thy kingdom*.

What power, O robber, enlightened thee? Who taught thee to worship that despised Man, thy companion on the Cross? O Eternal Light, which givest light to them that are in darkness! Therefore also he rightly heard the words, "Be of good cheer;" not that thy deeds are such as should make thee be of good cheer, but that the King is here dispensing favours. The request reached unto a distant time, but the grace is very speedy: *Verily I say unto thee, To-day shalt thou be with Me in Paradise^x*, because "to-day thou hast heard My voice, and hast not hardened thy heart^y." Very speedily I passed sentence upon Adam, very speedily I pardon thee. To him it was said, "In the

^r St. John x. 18.

^s Isa. liii. 12.

^t Ps. cix. 25.

^u St. Luke xxiii. 40, &c.

^x Ibid. ver. 43.

^y Ps. xcv. 7, 8.

day wherein thou eatest thou shalt surely die^a;" but thou to-day hast obeyed the faith, to-day is thy salvation. Adam by the Tree fell, thou by the Tree art brought to Paradise.

Of this garden I sang of old to My spouse in the Canticles, and spake thus to her: "I am come into My garden, My sister, My spouse;" (now the place where He was crucified was a garden;) and what takest Thou thence? "I have gathered My myrrh^a," having drunk wine mingled with myrrh and vinegar. And having received these, He said, "It is finished^b." For the mystery has been fulfilled; the things that are written have been fulfilled; sins are forgiven. "For Christ being come an High-Priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building; neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by His own Blood, He entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us. For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh, how much more shall the Blood of Christ^c?" And, again: "Having, therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the Blood of Jesus, by a new and living way, which He hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, His Flesh^d." And because His Flesh, this veil, was dishonoured, the emblematical veil of the temple was rent through, as it is written, "And behold the veil of the Temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom^e;" for not a morsel of it was left; for since the Master said, "Behold, your house is left unto you desolate^f," the house has been rent in pieces.

These things the Saviour endured, "making peace through the Blood of His Cross, for things in heaven

^a Gen. ii. 17.

^a Cant. v. 1.

^b St. John xix. 30.

^c Heb. ix. 11, &c.

^d Ibid. x. 19.

^e St. Matt. xxvii. 51.

^f Ibid. xxiii. 38.

on earth^g." For we were enemies of God, and God had appointed the sinner to die. needs, therefore, have happened one of two, either that God, keeping His words, should condemn men, or that in His loving-kindness He should reverse the sentence. But behold the wisdom of God, who reserved both to His sentence its truth, and to His loving-kindness its exercise. Christ took our sin, and His Body on the Tree, that we, being dead, should live to righteousness^h." Of no small

He who died for us; He was not a literal man, but He was not a mere man; He was more than man, for He was God made man. The transgression was not so great as the righteousness of which He died for them; we have not committed as much sin as He has wrought righteousness.

Who laid down His life for us,—Who laid it down when He pleased, and Who took it again when He pleased. And we have proof that He laid down His life for us, for He cried to the Father, saying, *Father, into Thy hands I commend My spirit*ⁱ; I commend it, that I may take it again. And having said these things, He gave up the ghost^k; but not for any long time, for He rose again from the dead speedily.

The world was darkened because of "the Sun of Righteousness^l;" the rocks were rent because of the earthquake; the tombs were opened, and the dead arose because of Him who was "free among the dead." He sent forth His prisoners out of the pit, and He gave life to waterⁿ." Be not then ashamed of the cross, but let it be thyself bold to say, "He beareth our iniquities, and carrieth our sorrows, and with His stripes we are healed^o." Let us not be unthankful to our

^h 1 Pet. ii. 24.

ⁱ St. Luke xxiii. 46.

^l i. 50.

^k Mal. iv. 2.

^m Ps. lxxxviii. 5.

ⁿ Isa. liii. 4, 5.

Let us not be ashamed to confess the Crucified. **Be** the Cross our seal made with boldness by our fingers on our brow, and in every thing; over the bread **we** eat, and the cups we drink; in our comings in, **and** goings out; before our sleep, when we lie down, **and** when we awake; when we are in the way, and when we are still. Great is that preservative; it is without price, for the poor's sake; without toil, for the sick; since also its grace is from God. It is the sign of the faithful, and the dread of devils; "For He has triumphed over them in it having made a show of them openly ^p;" for when they see the Cross, they are reminded of the Crucified; they are afraid of Him Who hath "bruised the heads of the dragon ^q." Despise not the Seal because of the freeness of the gift; but for this the rather honour thy Benefactor.

And if thou art ever led into disputation, and hast not the grounds of proofs, yet let Faith remain firm in thee; or rather, become thou well learned, and then silence the Jews out of the prophets, and the Greeks out of their own fables. If they are not ashamed to worship men thunderstricken and abhorred of God, art thou ashamed to worship the beloved Son of God, Who was crucified for thee?

Take therefore, first, as an unassailable foundation, the Cross, and build upon it the rest of the faith. Deny not the Crucified; for if thou deny Him, thou hast many to arraign thee. Judas the traitor will arraign thee first; for he who betrayed Him knew that He was condemned to death by the chief priests and elders. The thirty pieces of silver bear witness; Gethsemane bears witness, where the betrayal took place; I speak not yet of the Mount of Olives, on which they were that night, praying; the moon in the night bears witness; the day bears witness, and the darkened sun; for it endured not to look on the crime

^p Colos. ii. 15.

^q Ps. lxxiv. 13.

conspirators. The fire remonstrates with thee, which Peter stood and warmed himself; if thou touch the Cross, the eternal fire awaits thee. I say this is severe, that thou mayest not have experience.

Remember the swords that came against Him at Bethsemane, that thou be not punished by the sword. The house of Caiaphas will arraign thee, shewing by its present desolation the power of Him Who was erewhile judged there; yea, Caiaphas himself will rise up against thee in the day of judgment; the very servant will rise up against thee, who smote Jesus with the palm of his hand; they also who betrayed Him, and they who led Him away. Even Pilate shall rise up against thee, and Pilate; as if say-Why deniest thou Him Who was slandered unto thee by the Jews, Whom we knew to have done no wrong? For I, Pilate, then washed my hands. The witnesses shall rise up against thee, and the soldiers who put on Him the purple robe, and set on Him the crown of thorns, and crucified Him in Golgotha, and cast lots for His coat. Simon the Cyrenian will rise up against thee, who bore the Cross behind Jesus.

There will cry out upon thee, among the stars, the red Sun; among the things upon earth, the Wine pressed with myrrh; among reeds, the Reed; among the Hyssop; among the things of the sea, the Sea; among trees, the Wood of the Cross; the soldiers, too, as was said, who nailed Him and cast lots for His vesture; the soldier who pierced His side with the spear; the women who then were present; the wall of the Temple then rent asunder; the hall of the Temple, now laid waste by the power of Him Who was crucified; this holy Golgotha, rising on high and displaying itself to this day, and displaying even yet, because of Christ the rocks were then riven; the rolling stone of the sepulchre where He was laid; and the stone which was laid on the door, which lies to this day by the tomb; the Angels who were then present;

the women who worshipped Him after His resurrection; Peter and John, who ran to the sepulchre; and Thomas, who thrust his hand into His side, and his fingers into the print of the nails, for it was for our sakes that he so carefully handled Him; for what thou who wert not there present wouldst have sought, he being present, by God's providence, did seek.

Thou hast twelve Apostles witnesses of the Cross, and the whole earth and the world of men who believe on Him who was upon it. Let thy very presence here now persuade thee of the power of the Crucified. For who has now brought thee to this assembly? What soldiers? With what bonds hast thou been forced? What doom has driven thee here now? No, but the salutary trophy of Jesus, the Cross, has brought you all together. This has enslaved the Persians, and tamed the Scythians; this, to the Egyptians, has given, for cats and dogs and their manifold errors, the knowledge of God; this, to this day heals diseases; this, to this day drives away devils, and overthrows the juggleries of drugs and charms.

This shall appear again with Jesus from heaven^r, for the trophy shall precede the King: that seeing "Him whom they pierced^s," and by the Cross knowing Him who was dishonoured, the Jews may repent and mourn; (but "they shall mourn tribe by tribe^t," when their season for repentance shall be no more,) and that we may glory, boasting of the Cross, worshipping the Lord who was sent, and crucified for us, and worshipping also God His Father who sent Him, with the Holy Ghost: to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen^u.

^r It is the common opinion of the Fathers, that "the sign of the Son of Man in heaven," St. Matt. xxiv. 30, will be the Cross. See St. Chrysostom in Gospel for Sixth Sunday after Epiphany, p. 187.

^s Zech. xii. 10. ^t Ibid. ver. 12, Sept. ^u St. Cyril, Lect. xiii.

GOOD FRIDAY.

THE EPISTLE.

HEB. x. 1—25.

“The Law having a shadow of good things to come,” &c.

The law having a shadow of good things to come, and not the very image of the things, (that is of the sacrifice, of the remission,) can never with those sacrifices, which they offered year by year continually, make the comers thereunto perfect: for then would they not have ceased to be offered? because that the worshippers once purged should have had no more conscience of sins. But in those sacrifices there is a remembrance again made of sins every year. For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins. Wherefore, when He cometh into the world, He saith, Sacrifice and offering Thou wouldest not, but a body hast Thou prepared Me: In burnt-offerings and sacrifices for sin Thou hast had no pleasure: Then said I, Lo, I come (in the volume of the book it is written of Me) to do Thy will, O God. Above, when He said, Sacrifice and offering, and burnt-offerings, and offering for sin Thou wouldest not, neither hadst pleasure therein, which are offered by the Law: then said He, Lo, I come to do Thy will, O God. He taketh away the first, that He may establish the second.

Do you here see the advantage on our side? This Sacrifice, he says, is one, but those are many, for they are weak, owing to the very fact that they are so many. For what need, I ask, was there of many, when one is sufficient? So that the number and the constant repetition of the offering shews that they [the Jews] are never purified by them. Why, I pray, do they con-

tinually minister at the same sacrifices? for if they were rid of all their sins, sacrifices would not be offered every day; and they were offered every day, for they had been ordained, so as to be continually offered by the whole people both in the evening and in the morning. So that that which happened became an accusation, not a remission of sins; an accusation of weakness, not a demonstration of strength. For since the first availed nothing, a second also was offered; and when this accomplished nothing, a third was offered; so that this offering is a means of convicting of sin, and the frequency of the offering is a means of convicting of weakness.

But in the case of Christ the reverse takes place. He was offered once for all, and suffered for ever. The types have then the figures only and not the power: as in the case of images, the image has the figure of the man, but not the power. But how now? Do not we Christians offer every day? We do indeed offer, but by making a memorial of His death. And this very offering is one, not many. How is it one, not many? When that great Sacrifice of Christ had once been offered, it was carried into the Holy of Holies; each is a figure of the other; for we always offer the same Victim, not now one sheep and to-morrow another, but always the same, so that the Sacrifice is one. But can this be, since according to this argument when it is offered in many places there are many Christs? God forbid! Christ is One everywhere; present in His fulness both in this place and in that, one only Body. As then, though offered in many places He is One Body and not many bodies, so also is there One Sacrifice. Our High-Priest is He Who offered the Sacrifice that purifies us. This is the Sacrifice that we offer even now, the same which was then offered, that can never be exhausted. This takes place for a memorial of that which then took place. For, "do this," He says, "for My memorial." It is not another sacri-

fice that we offer, as did the High-Priest, but always the same, or rather we make memorial of a Sacrifice.

Above, when He said, Sacrifice and offering, and burnt-offerings, and offering for sin Thou wouldest not, neither hadst pleasure therein, which are offered by the Law : then said He, Lo, I come to do Thy will, O God. He taketh away the first, that He may establish the second. By the which will we are sanctified, through the offering of the Body of Jesus Christ once for all. And every Priest standeth daily ministering, and offering oftentimes the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins. But this Man, after He had offered One Sacrifice for sins, for ever sat down at the right hand of God : from henceforth expecting until His enemies be made His footstool.

St. Paul, in what he said before, shewed that the sacrifices were useless for perfect purification, being only figures and far short of the reality. When, then, this objection occurred to him, "how, if they are types, when the reality came, did they not cease to be, nor are withdrawn, but are celebrated?" this very thing he here treats of, shewing that they are no longer celebrated even as a type ; for God does not accept them. And this he shews again, not from the New Testament but from the Prophets, bringing from an earlier part of the Divine writings the strongest witness, that they cease and come to an end ; and that the Jews perform all their rites to no purpose, as they evidently resist the Holy Ghost. And he abundantly proves that they not merely ceased now, but had ceased even at the very time of the coming of Christ ; and that Christ did not put an end to them as His last act, but they were first put an end to, and then He came ; they first ceased, and then He appeared. For that they might not say, "even without this same Sacrifice we were able to please God," even through those former sacrifices, He waited for them to be proved futile, and then He Himself appeared ; for, *Sacrifice, he says, and offering Thou wouldest not ;* He took them all away by

this saying; and after speaking generically he declares also specifically, *Burnt sacrifices and offering for sin Thou hadst no pleasure in.* And the offering which is here mentioned, was everything that was offered besides the slain sacrifice; *Then said I, Lo, I am come.* Concerning whom is this said? Concerning none other save Christ Himself. In this place he no way blames those who offer them, for he shews that it is not on account of their evil deeds that God refuses to accept them, (just as he says in another place,) but because henceforth the thing has been proved futile, and thoroughly detected as having no strength nor even any office attaching to it. What, then, has this to do with the sacrifices being often offered? Not from the "oftentimes" only it is manifest, he says, that they are weak and accomplished nothing, but also from the fact that God does not accept them, as being useless and unprofitable. And by way of proving the same thing, elsewhere he says, "If Thou hadst willed sacrifice I would have given it^a." Wherefore by this saying also he manifests that He does not will it. It is not then the sacrifices, but the abolition of the sacrifices that is the will of God; therefore they (the Hebrews) sacrifice against His will. What is meant by *to do Thy will?* He means, "to give up Myself," this is the will of God. *By the which will we are sanctified,* or in other words, he says that it is not the sacrifices that purify men, but the will of God. Wherefore, then, to sacrifice, "is not the will of God." And why do you wonder if now it is not the will of God, when it was not His will even from the beginning? For "Who hath required these things at your hands^b?" he says. How is it, then, that He ordered it? As a means of accommodation to man's weakness. In the same way as Paul proposes two wills and yet prefers one of them, though he gives the injunction for both, saying, "I

^a Ps. li. 16.^b Isa. i. 12.

ould that all men were even as I myself," and afterwards giving a reason for this relaxation, saying, [I will that the younger women marry." So in like manner God Himself says in one place that He wills not the death of a sinner, and yet elsewhere pronounces a condemnation of sinners. It was not then God's *primary* intention that sacrifices should be made.

By the which will we are sanctified, he says. How sanctified? *Through the offering of the Body of Jesus Christ once for all. And every Priest standeth daily ministering, and offering oftentimes the same sacrifices.* Then, to stand is the sign of ministration : surely, then, to sit down is the sign of being ministered to. *This man, after He had offered one Sacrifice for sins, for ever sat down on the right hand of God : from henceforth expecting till His enemies be made His footstool. For by one offering He hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified : whereof the Holy Ghost also is a witness to us.* He said that those sacrifices are not offered ; he inferred this from what is in the Scripture and from what is not in the Scripture ; and especially he put forward a prophetic declaration, which says, that *Sacrifice and offering Thou wouldest not.* He said that He remitted the sins. This, again, he confirms from scriptural testimony ; for he says, *The Holy Ghost also is a witness to us : for after that He had said before, this is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, saith the Lord, I will put My laws into their hearts, and in their minds will I write them ; and their sins and iniquities will I remember no more. Now where remission of these is, there is no more offering for sin.* Wherefore He remitted sins when He gave the covenant, and He gave the covenant through the medium of the sacrifice. If, therefore, He remitted sins through the one Sacrifice, there is no more need of a second. *He sat down on the right hand of God, henceforth expecting.* On what account is the delay? That His enemies may be put under His feet. For with one

offering He has perfected for ever the sanctified. But perhaps some one will say, Why is it that He has not immediately placed them under His feet? For the sake of the faithful destined to be brought forth and begotten. Whence, then, is it manifest that they will be so placed under His feet? From His saying that *He sat down*. He called to mind again that witness of Him which says, "Until I put His enemies under His feet." And His enemies are the Jews. Moreover, when he said, "Until His enemies are put under His feet," they (his readers) were in great haste for this event. It is for this reason that he inserts all the discourse that follows concerning faith. And who are His enemies? All unbelievers, demons. And representing the greatness of the subjection under a figure, he did not say, "be subject," but, "be put under His feet."

Let us not, then, be of the number of His enemies; for it is not they only, the unbeliever and the Jew, that are enemies, but also those among us who are full of impure living; "For the lust of the flesh is enmity with God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be."

Having, therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the Holiest by the Blood of Jesus, by a new and living way, which He hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, His Flesh; and having an High-Priest over the house of God; let us draw near with a true heart, in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water. Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering.

Having, then, brethren, boldness to enter into the Holiest by the Blood of Jesus, by a new and living way. After shewing the difference of the High-Priest, of the sacrifices, of the tabernacle, of the Covenant, and of the promise; and the difference is a great one, at least if the one be for a time, but the other for ever; the one ready to vanish away, but the other enduring;

the one weak, but the other perfect; the one type, the other reality;—since, then, all those things are less, but these greater, on this account he says, *Having, therefore, brethren, boldness,*—(boldness whence? From the remission of our sins; even as sins, he means, cause shame, so does the remission of them all, and our becoming fellow-heirs, and enjoying such great love, give us boldness,)—*to enter into the holiest,*—(what does he speak of as an entrance here? Of heaven, and access to spiritual things,)—*by a new and living way, which He consecrated,* that is, which He established and began; for the beginning of use for the future is called consecration: “which He established,” he means, and by which He went Himself.

A new and living way. Here he makes manifest the full assurance of the hope. *New*, he says. He is compelled to shew them that we possess all things more largely; at least, if the gates of heaven were opened, which did not happen even in the days of Abraham. *A new way*, he says, *and a living*, for the first way was that of death leading to Hades, but this of life. And he did not say ‘of life,’ but called it *living*, that is, the way which endured^c. *Through the veil*, he says, of *His flesh*; for it was this same flesh which first cut that way which he also says that He consecrated, in that He deigned to pass through it. And it is with reason he called it a veil; for when it was lifted up on high, then what was in the heavens was made manifest. *Let us approach*, he says, *with a true heart*. What are we to approach? Holy things, faith, and spiritual worship. *With a true heart, in full assurance of faith*. *Faith*, he says, since nothing is visible any longer, neither the priest, nor the sacrifice, nor the altar. And yet neither was that priest visible; but he stood within, and the whole of the people without. But in this case, not only does he prove that the Priest

^c The passage appears corrupt. Literally, “that is, the ordinances, the way, which endured.”

entered into the holy places,—for this Paul makes evident by the expression, *And a High-Priest over the house of God*,—but that we also enter in. This is the reason why he says, *In full assurance of faith*.

We ought so to believe as we should in the case of visible things, and far more than this. For even in the case of things visible it is possible to be mistaken, but not in the other. In this case we rely upon our senses, but in that upon the Spirit. *Having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience*. He shews that not faith only, but also a virtuous life is sought for, and freedom from the consciousness of anything evil. For the holy place does not receive those who are not thus affected with *full assurance of faith*; for it is holy, and the Holy of Holies; no man, therefore, who is profane can enter here. They had their bodies sprinkled, we our conscience; so that we must now be sprinkled all over with virtue itself. *And (having) our body washed with pure water*. He speaks here of the laver (of baptism), which is the cleanser not of the body, but of the soul^d.

THE GOSPEL.

ST. JOHN xix. 1—37.

“ Pilate therefore took Jesus, and scourged Him,” &c.

The Saviour scourged, crowned with thorns, smitten and mocked.

Thus were the things fulfilled which Jesus had foretold concerning Himself; thus was a pattern set to the martyrs for bearing all that the persecutors should list to do unto them; thus, hiding for a little space His dread powers, did He commend His patience

^d St. Chrysostom, in loc. Translated for this work; see p. 361.

to be first imitated ; thus did the kingdom which was not of this world overcome the proud world, not with fierceness of fighting, but with lowliness of suffering ; thus was that grain of wheat, which was to be multiplied, sown in horrible disgrace to sprout forth in marvellous glory.

“ Behold the Man ! ”

Jesus came forth, *wearing the crown of thorns, and the purple robe* ; not bright with imperial glory, but covered with reproach ; and Pilate saith, *Behold the Man !* If upon the King ye look with an evil eye, now spare because ye see Him cast down ; He is scourged, crowned with thorns, clad with a garment of mockery, scoffed at with bitter taunts, smitten with the palms of men’s hands ; He is covered with burning disgrace ; let your hatred cool. But it does not cool, rather it increases and becomes more hot^o.

He ought to die, because He made Himself the Son of God.

Tell me, is this a ground of accusation, that He who performed the deeds of the Son of God should call Himself the Son of God¹ ?

The Saviour silent.

Not in vain did the prophecy go before concerning Him : “ As a lamb before her shearers is dumb, so He openeth not His mouth^s. ”

This similitude of a lamb was given, that His might be seen to be the silence, not of guilt, but of innocence. When, during His trial, He opened not His mouth, not as one of evil conscience, whom men were convicting of sin, He opened it not ; but as a lamb, as the meek one, Who was being immolated for the sins of others.

He speaks.

Thou couldest have no power at all against Me, except it were given thee from above.

^o St. Augustine.
E. V., sheep.

¹ St. Chrys., *in loc.*

^s Isa. liii. 7 ;

Behold He hath made answer! When He opened not His mouth, it was not as of guilt or in guile, but as a lamb, in simplicity and innocence. When He answered not, as a sheep He held His peace; when He answered, as the Shepherd He taught. Let us learn, therefore, what He hath said, and what He hath also taught by the Apostle, that "there is no power but of God ^h."

When, then, the Lord for our salvation gave Himself up to the hands of Satan's members,—(for Pilate shewed himself a member of Satan, when, even to the extremity of putting Him to death, he knew not the Lord when He came for our redemption,)—what else did He but let loose the hand of Satan to rage against Himself, that by the very act whereby He Himself outwardly fell low, He might set us free both outwardly and inwardly. If the hand of Satan is taken for his power, He after the flesh, bore the hand of him, whose powerⁱ over the body He endured even to the spitting, the buffeting, the stripes, the cross, the lance; and hence, when He cometh to His Passion, He saith to Pilate, (i.e. to the member of Satan,) *Thou couldest have no power at all against Me, except it were given thee from above*; and this power, which He had given to be used outwardly against Himself, He compelled to serve the end of His own hidden purpose. For Pilate, or Satan, who was Pilate's head, was held under the power of that One over whom he had received power; in that Christ being far above Satan, He had Himself so ordained that which He, now condescending to an inferior condition, was undergoing from the persecutor, as that, though it arose from the evil mind of unbelievers, yet that very cruelty itself might also serve to the weal of all the elect, and therefore He mercifully ordained the inner working of all that which He suffered Himself thus foully to undergo outwardly^k.

^h St. Augustine, *in loc.*ⁱ Job ii. 6.^k St. Gregory on Job ii. 6.

Therefore he that delivered Me unto thee hath the greater sin.

The power which God had given to Pilate was of such a nature that he was subject to the power of Cæsar. Wherefore, *thou couldst not have*, saith Christ, *against Me any power*, i.e. however little, unless this same, whatever it be, *were given thee from above*. But since I know how much it is, for it is not so much that it should be free to thee to exercise it in every way, *therefore he that delivered Me unto thee hath the greater sin*. For he delivered Me to thy power as having ill-will against Me, but thou art about to exercise that power against Me as being afraid for thyself¹.

It was from weakness that Pilate yielded and scourged Christ, and delivered Him up. He then was unmanly and weak; but the chief priests were wicked and criminal.

And He, the true Master, saith not, *he that delivered Me unto thee*, he hath the sin, as if the other had it not; but He saith, *hath the greater sin*, that Pilate might understand that he, too, had sin. For it does not follow that the one sin is nothing, because the other is greater.

From thenceforth Pilate sought to release Him. What means this saying, *from thenceforth*, as if till then he did not seek it? Read what goes before, and thou wilt find that he has been all along seeking to release Jesus. *From thenceforth*, then, is to be understood to mean, because of this, i.e. to this intent, that he might not have sin by putting to death an innocent man delivered to him^m.

The Jews reject their King.

But the Jews cried out, saying, If thou let this Man go, thou art not Cæsar's friend. . . . We have no king but Cæsar.

¹ St. Augustine, in loc.

^m St. Chrys. on St. Matt.

Of their own will they subjected themselves to punishment; therefore also God gave them up, because they first cast themselves out from His providence and superintendence; and since with one voice they rejected His sovereignty, He allowed them to fall by their own suffrages^a.

Do not, brethren, in the Jews alone remark this thing. There were given in them, as it were, primitive examples, to the end that in that people might be clearly seen that whereof every man should beware. There is, indeed, a Cæsar, a human king, for men in things human; but another king there is for things divine. One king for life temporal, another king for life eternal; one king earthly, another king heavenly; the earthly king under the heavenly king, the heavenly king over all. It is not, therefore, because they said they had Cæsar for king that they sinned, but because they would not have Christ for king^o.

The Saviour bearing His Cross.

A great spectacle! But to impiety a great disport to look upon; to piety a great mystery; to impiety a great display of ignominy; to piety a strengthening of faith, but impiety looks and laughs to see a king bearing, instead of the rod of sovereignty, the wood of His punishment. Piety sees the king bearing that Cross for Himself to be fixed thereon, which He would thereafter fix even on the brows of kings; the impious see an object of contempt in that in which thereafter the hearts of the Saints should glory^p.

"The place of a skull."

Some say that Adam died there, and there lieth; and that Jesus, in this place where death had reigned, there also set up the trophy. For He went forth bearing the Cross as a trophy over the tyranny of death; and as conquerors do, so He bare upon His shoulders the symbol of victory^q.

^a St. Chrys. on St. John.

^p St. Aug. on St. John.

^o St. Aug. Ps. lvi.

^q St. Chrysostom.

Pilate writes, "JESUS OF NAZARETH THE KING OF THE JEWS."

Oh ineffable power of the working of God even in the hearts of the ignorant!

Write not, the King of the Jews; but that He said, I am the King of the Jews. Pilate answered, What I have written, I have written.

What speak ye, ye madmen? Why do ye gainsay the doing of that which ye can in no wise change? For shall it not therefore be true, because Jesus said it, *I am the King of the Jews*? If that cannot be destroyed which Pilate hath written, can that be destroyed which the Truth hath spoken?

The soldiers part the Garments, but not the Coat.

Lo! this is that whereof ye have heard in the Psalm. This Garment the persecutors of Christ forbore to rend: Christians would divide His Church.

The Saviour commends His Mother to the Beloved Disciple.

This, surely, is the hour of which Jesus had said unto His Mother, "Woman, what have I to do with thee? Mine hour is not yet come^r." This, then, was the hour at that time not yet come, the hour in which it would be right for Him, being at the point to die, to acknowledge her of whom He was in mortal manner born. At that time, being about to work as God, her who was the Mother, not of His Divinity, but of His infirmity, He repulsed as one unknown; but now, suffering as man, with man's affection He commended her of whom He was made man. For at that time He that created Mary was making Himself known by power; but now, That to which Mary had given birth was hanging on the Cross.

The Saviour said, "It is finished." And He gave up the ghost.

"Fulfilled are all things which were prophesied before My Passion, then what make I any longer here?"

^r St. John ii. 4.

And when He had said, *It is finished*, He bowed His Head, and gave up the ghost. Did those thieves who were nailed beside Him expire when they would? They were held by the bonds of the flesh, because they were not creators of the flesh; fixed by the nails they were long excruciated, because they had not dominion over their infirmity. But the Lord, when He would, took flesh in the Virgin's womb; when He would, came forth to men; while He would, lived among men; when He would, departed from the flesh. This is of power, not of necessity. This, then, was the hour He waited for; not a fated, but a seasonable and voluntary hour, that all might first be completed, which before His Passion behoved to be completed. And indeed how could He be under necessity of fate, Who in another place hath said, "I have power to lay down My life, and I have power to take it again: none taketh it from Me, but I Myself lay it down from Me, and take it again?"

He bowed His Head, and gave up the ghost. Who so sleeps when he will, as Jesus died when He would? Who so lays aside his clothing as he will, as He put off the flesh when He would? Who so departs from a place when he will, as He departed this life when He would? What must we hope or fear to find His power when He judgeth, if it was seen to be so great when He died*?

They beseech Pilate that their legs might be broken. The soldiers pierce the Saviour's side.

Seest thou how strong a thing is truth? Prophecy is fulfilled by means of the very things which proceed from their zeal; and thus the plain prediction, *A bone of Him shall not be broken*, unconnected with them, receives its accomplishment. For the soldiers when they came, brake the legs of the others, but not those of Christ; yet to gratify the Jews they pierced His

* St. Augustine on St. John.

with a spear, and insulted the dead Body. O inable and accursed purpose! Yet, beloved, be thou confounded, be not thou desponding; for the s which these men did from a wicked will, fought e side of the truth. For there was a prophecy, g, *They shall look on Him Whom they pierced.* And is only, but the deed then dared was a demonstra- of the faith to those who should afterwards dis- e, as Thomas, and those like him. With this, n ineffable mystery was accomplished; for, *there out water and blood.* Not without a purpose, or ance, did those founts come forth, but because ans of these two together the Church consisteth. the initiated know it, being by water indeed erate, and nourished by the Blood and the Flesh. e the Mysteries take their beginning,—to teach hat when thou approachest to that awful Cup mayest so approach as drinking from the very

† St. Chrysostom.

EASTER EVEN.

THE EPISTLE.

1 ST. PETER iii. 17—22.

“ It is better, if the will of God be so,” &c.

It is better, if the will of God be so, that ye suffer for well-doing, than for evil-doing. For Christ also hath suffered for sins, the Just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God.

Let us, knowing that we suffer for the truth, and that those who deny the Lord smite and persecute us, “count it all joy, my brethren,” according to the words of James, “when we fall into trials of divers temptations, knowing that the trial of our faith worketh patience^a.” Our Saviour did not redeem us by ease; but He abolished death by suffering for us^b.

And while we imitate Him with pious obedience, let us not by any audacity presume to compare ourselves with Him. Albeit brethren die for brethren, yet unto remission of a brother’s sins no martyr’s blood is shed, which thing He did for us; not in this regard giving us an example that we should imitate, but a benefit for which we should be grateful^c.

Being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit. By which also He went and preached unto the spirits in prison^d; which sometime were disobedient, when

^a St. James i. 2.

^b St. Athanasius, Festal Ep. xiii.

^c St. Aug. on St. John xv. 13.

^d “The holy Lord of Israel remembered His dead, who were before asleep in the land of sepulture; and went down to them, that He might tell them the good news of His salvation, to save them.” Quoted as from Jeremiah by St. Irenæus. St. Justin also quotes the passage, and accuses the Jews of having erased it on account of its reference to Christ.

once the long-suffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing^e.

The soul of the faithful knows, on the witness of the Apostle Peter, that when the Lord went down into Hades, words of comfort were preached even to those who were in prison, and were formerly unbelieving in the days of Noah, and did not enter the ark, but may probably have had some strong penitential emotions, and have put up some hearty penitential prayers to God, and may have had some earnest desires, and made some eager but fruitless efforts to enter the ark, when the Flood came and destroyed them^f.

By which also He went and preached to the spirits in prison; which sometime were disobedient, when once the long-suffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing; wherein few, that is, eight souls, were saved by water.

Here he solves that objection which opponents use when they say, "If the Incarnation be of any avail, why was He not incarnate many ages before?" For behold, did He not "go and preach also to the spirits in prison," that He might release them as many as would have believed, had He, clothed in flesh, gone in and out upon the earth at that time? These, at least, acknowledged Him manifesting Himself even in the subterranean abodes, and were profited by the manifestation^g.

In the spirit He went and preached to those in Hades, as a spirit appearing among spirits, beholding Whom the keepers of the gates of Hades crouched for fear, and the gates of brass were burst open, and the bars of iron were shattered, and the Only-begotten cried out with power to those in like case with Himself, and according to the word of the dispensation,

^e The compiler would invite attention to Bp. Horsley's sermon on this text.

^f St. Hilary on Ps. cxix. 82. (From Bp. Wordsworth's Commentary on 1 St. Pet. iii.)

^g St. Cyril of Alexandria; from Cramer's Catena.

saying to those in bonds, Go forth; and to those in darkness, Shew yourselves.

That is, He preached even to those in Hades, that He might release them, as many as would have believed, if in the time of their lives He had in His flesh sojourned among them. For these, at least, acknowledged Him manifesting Himself in Hades. For the greater things of the dispensation towards us are beyond nature and inexpressible. Just as, therefore, Christ during His presence on earth in the flesh addressed all alike, and those who believed were profited; so by means of the descent into Hades, He freed those believing in and acknowledging Him from the bonds of death. For the souls of those who had lived in idolatries and lawless lusts, as if blinded by carnal affections, were not able to look towards the splendour of the manifestation of God; that they also should faithfully acknowledge Him who came for the purpose of freeing all men, and for this very purpose manifested Himself in the subterranean regions and preached to all in common; and with clemency He shewed forth justice also, that those who had failed of such a benefit might have whereof to accuse themselves, and those also who had forsaken God the maker of all things, both having served the devils who are man's enemies, and having lived all through life at their bidding^h.

Not, however, to all detained there, but to those alone who believed on and acknowledged Him did He bestow the gift of remission. They who cleansed themselves from their wickedness, according to the time they lived in the flesh, acknowledged Him by good works. For they who had lived among their fellow-men in integrity, were, before Christ manifested Himself in the subterranean regions, held under the bonds of death, and there awaited His coming, the way to Paradise being, by the transgression of Adam,

^h St. Cyril of Alexandria, (or, according to a different reading.—Timothy); from Cramer's Catena.

barred to them. But that not all those who were in the subterranean regions reaped to themselves profit of Christ's descent thither, but only those who believed, Gregory the Divine makes clear in the discourse for Easter, in the newly-started doubt holding forth the proposition as worthy of research, giving in the induction the grasp of the truth; for he said thus: "And if He descended into Hades, descend ye with Him, and know there the mysteries, what is the dispensation of the twofold descent, what is the doctrine. Manifesting Himself He saves all absolutely, or those who there believed on Him." And Ignatius, the Martyr and the Divinely-gifted, thus speaks: "How shall we be able to live apart from Him whose disciples in the spirit, even the prophets, were looking for Him as their Teacher? And therefore He Whom they justly waited for, when He was come, raised them from the dead¹."

[*St. Augustine being consulted by a brother bishop, Evodius, concerning this text, in reply to him (Ep. clxiv.) discusses it in full, acknowledges its extreme obscurity, and after alluding to other interpretations, with their difficulties, adds § 15.*]

But consider whether all that which the Apostle Peter says concerning the spirits shut up in prison, who had not believed in the days of Noah, may not refer, not to the dwellers in hell at all, but rather to those times, whose figure he transferred to these times. For that event was a figure of things future, that they who now do not believe the Gospel while the Church is "a building" in all nations, may be understood to be like those who then did not believe *while the ark was a preparing*. But they who have believed and are saved^k through Baptism, are compared with those who at that time were saved through water in the same ark. Hence he says, "so by a like figure Baptism saves you also." To this "likeness of figure," then, let us adapt the other things said concerning unbelievers, and let us

¹ Severus. Epistle to the Magnesians, cap. ix.; from Cramer's Catena.
^k *salvi fiunt.*

not imagine that the Gospel was preached among the dwellers in hell to make them believers, and to set them free; or is preached there now [in that view], as though the Church were established there also¹.

When once the long-suffering of God waited, &c.

In that He destroyed by a flood all men, except one just man and his family, who He willed should be saved by the ark, He knew assuredly that they would not amend themselves; nevertheless, while during a hundred years the ark was built, herein certainly was still preached to them the wrath of God about to come upon them; and if they would return to God, He would spare them, as He spared in after times the city of Nineveh upon its doing penance², when by His Prophet He had foretold their coming destruction. But this God does, granting opportunity for repentance even to them who He knows will go on and continue in their sin, in order by His own example to exercise and instruct us in patience, that we may understand with how great long-suffering we ought to bear with the bad, seeing that we know not what kind of men they will hereafter be, since He, from Whom nothing future is hidden, spares them and suffers them to live.

And yet further in that sacrament of the Flood, wherein the just were delivered by the Wood, the future Church was prophesied of, which Christ its King and God hath by the mystery of His Cross upheld and kept from the drowning of this world³.

Wherein few, that is, eight souls, were saved by water. The like figure whereunto, even Baptism, doth also now save us.

In Isaiah God has said to Jerusalem, "In the deluge of Noah I saved thee⁴." What God said is this, that the mystery of mankind who are saved was in the

¹ St. Augustine.
Treatise De Catech.

² *Agenti penitentiam.*

³ St. Aug.,

⁴ These precise words are not to be found in Isaiah, or in any other part of Scripture.

deluge. For righteous Noah with the others at the deluge,—that is, his wife, and his three sons and their wives, making eight persons in number,—were a type of that day on which our Christ appeared when He arose from the dead, which in number indeed is the eighth, but in power is always the first; for Christ being the first-born of every creature, was also made again the beginning of a new race, which is regenerated by Him through water, and faith, and wood, which contains the mystery of the Cross; as Noah also was saved in wood, being borne upon the waters with his family.

But you suppose ^p that this was spoken only to your nation or land; but the Scripture says that the whole earth was covered, and that the water was fifteen cubits above all the mountains; so that it is plain that God spoke this not to your land, but to the people who are obedient to Him, for whom He here also prepared a rest in Jerusalem, as has been foreshewn by all the types in the deluge. I mean that by water, and faith, and wood, they who are prepared and repent of the sins they have committed, shall escape the judgment of God which is about to come ^q.

Not the putting away the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience towards God.

What is the use of that baptism [i.e. the Jewish], which only cleans the *flesh*? Be ye baptized in your *souls* ^r.

Vain will appear that saying of Peter, *Thus Baptism doth in like manner save you, not the putting away the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience*, if, indeed, even though men have evil consciences full of all sins and wickedness, and unchanged by repentance, yet, notwithstanding, Baptism doth save them. . . . Also I see not wherefore in this case the Lord said, "If thou wilt come unto life, keep the commandments,"

^p St. Justin is speaking to Trypho, the Jew.
Martyr, Dial. Trypho.
Com. in loc.

^q Justin
^r Justin Martyr; from Bp. Wordsworth,

and made mention of those which pertain to a good life and morals, if, even though these be not kept, a man may come unto life through faith alone, which "without works is dead."

Let us, therefore, take diligent heed, by the help of our Lord God, that we cause not in men an evil security, by telling them, that, if they shall have been baptized in Christ, of what nature soever their lives in that faith shall have been, they shall come unto eternal salvation; that we make not Christians in the manner in which the Jews made proselytes. Let us rather hold the sound doctrine of God our Master in both things; that there be a Christian life in harmony with holy Baptism, and that eternal life be promised to no man, if either be wanting. For He who said, "Except a man be born again of water and of the Spirit, he shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven;" Himself also said, "Except your righteousness exceed the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven*."

The like figure whereunto even baptism doth also now save us (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh), but the answer of a good conscience towards God.

In like manner as that punished the wicked and preserved the good, so also this drowns the evil spirits and preserves those entering into it. And also he shews how great is the power of baptism, inasmuch as it is a cleansing of the soul from sins. And he teaches how we need the same; and how otherwise than as confessing the resurrection of the Lord?

By the resurrection of Jesus Christ: Who is gone into heaven, and is on the right hand of God; angels and authorities and powers being made subject unto Him.

Mark, again, how clearly he sets forth the dispensation, for having mentioned Death and the Resurrection, he calls to mind also the Ascension into heaven, and

* St. Augustine, Tr. of Faith and Works.

Who is at the right hand of the Father. For lest thou shouldest suppose, from having heard that He became man and died, that He suffers any detriment, or that anything of His glory is lost, for this reason he tells of the Resurrection and the Ascension into heaven, and the Throne at the right hand of the Father; and how the whole multitude of those above worship Him. Here, again, this word[†] “being made subject” has been spoken to explain the dispensation[‡].

Who is gone into heaven.

We believe that He ascended into heaven, which place of blessedness He promised unto us also, saying, “They shall be as angels in heaven[‡],” in that city “which is the mother of us all[§],” Jerusalem, eternal in the heavens. But it is wont to offend certain either impious heathens or heretics, that we believe that an earthly body was taken up into heaven. But the heathen, for the most part, are anxious to treat with us with the arguments of the philosophers, so as to assert that nothing earthly can be in heaven. For our Scriptures they know not, nor understand in what way it was said, “It is sown an animal body, it is raised a spiritual body[‡].” For it was not so said, as if body were changed into spirit, and became spirit; because now also our body, which is called animal, hath not been turned into soul, and made soul, but by a spiritual body that is understood which hath been so subjected unto the spirit, as that it is suited to a heavenly habitation, all frailty and earthly stain having been changed, and turned into heavenly purity and steadfastness.

Where, however, and in what manner the Body of the Lord is in heaven, it were most over-curious and superfluous to enquire; only we must believe that He

[†] ὑποταγέντων. [‡] Ammonius; from Cramer's Catena. The above extracts from this Catena are translated by the Rev. Joseph Jackson.

[‡] St. Matt. xxii. 30.

[§] Gal. iv. 26.

[‡] 1 Cor. xv. 44; E. V., natural.

is in heaven. For it belongs not to our frailty to discuss the secrets of the heavens, but it belongs to our faith to entertain high and honourable thoughts concerning the dignity of our Lord's Body.

And is on the right hand of God.

Yet we must not therefore suppose that God the Father is inclosed, as it were, within a human form; so that, when we think of Him, there suggest itself to our mind a right or a left side, lest we fall into that blasphemy wherein the Apostle curses them who "changed the glory of the incorruptible God into the likeness of corruptible man^a." For such a likeness unto God it is impious for a Christian to place in a temple; much more is it impious to place it in the heart, where truly is the temple of God, if it be cleansed from earthly lust and error. Wherefore we must understand that, "at the right hand," is used in this sense, in the highest blessedness, where is righteousness, and peace, and joy; as the kids are set on the left hand, that is in misery, by reason of the labours and torments of unrighteousness^b.

Remember what I have often said concerning the Son's sitting on the right hand of the Father. Let us not curiously pry into what is properly meant by the throne; for it is incomprehensible; nor endure those who falsely say, that it was after His Cross, and Resurrection, and Ascension into heaven, that the Son began to sit on the right hand of the Father. For the Son gained not His throne by advancement, but from the time that He is, (and He is ever-begotten), He also sitteth together with the Father^c.

Angels and authorities and powers being made subject unto Him.

Whatever there be in heaven, He has become above all. And what most calls for our admiration is this,

^a Rom. i. 23.

^b St. Augustine on the Creed.

^c St. Cyril, Catechetical Lect. xiv.

that this is said of Him that was raised from the dead, for of God the Word it cannot possibly be, because what insects are in comparison of man, this the whole creation is in comparison of God. And why do I say insects? If all mankind are to be counted as a drop of moisture, and were counted in the turn of a balance, consider the invisible powers as insects. It is not, then, of God the Word that this is spoken, but of Him that was one of us. This is great and surprising indeed; yet He raised Him up from the very lowest parts of the earth. If all the nations are as a drop, how small a portion of that drop is a single man! Yet Him hath He made higher than all things, "not only in this world, but also in that which is to come;" therefore there are powers whose names are to us unintelligible and unknown.

Christ hath both Himself descended to the lowest depth of humiliation, and hath raised up man to the height of exaltation^d.

As He suffered, so also He liveth, and quickeneth, and healeth from every sickness; and as He died, so also is He the resurrection of the dead; a scorn upon earth, and in heaven high above all honour and praise. Who "was crucified of weakness, but liveth of the might of God;" Who "went down to the under parts of the earth," and ascended above the heaven; for Whom the manger sufficed, and Who filled all; Who "was dead and is alive for evermore. Amen^e."

^d St. Chrysostom on Eph. i. 20.

^e St. Irenæus.

THE GOSPEL.

ST. MATT. xxvii. 57—66.

“When the even was come,” &c.

When the even was come, there came a rich man of Arimathæa, named Joseph, who also himself was Jesus' disciple. He went to Pilate, and begged the body of Jesus. Then Pilate commanded the body to be delivered. And when Joseph had taken the body, he wrapped it in a clean linen cloth, and laid it in his own new tomb, which he had hewn out in the rock; and he rolled a great stone to the door of the sepulchre, and departed.

This was Joseph, who of late was concealing his discipleship; but now, after the Death of Christ, he had become very bold. For he was no obscure or unnoticed person, but one of the Council¹, and highly distinguished; from which circumstance especially one may see his courage; for he exposed himself to death, drawing on himself the enmity of all men, by his affection to Jesus, daring to beg the Body, and not desisting until he obtained It. And not only by this, and by burying It in a costly manner, but also by laying *It* in *his own new tomb*, he shewed his love and his courage. And this was not so ordered without purpose, but that there might not be any possibility of suspicion that one had risen instead of another².

Not without meaning has one Evangelist spoken of a new tomb, another of the tomb of Joseph. For the grave is prepared by those who are under the law of death; the Conqueror of death has no grave of His own. For what fellowship hath God with the grave? He alone is enclosed in this tomb, because the death of Christ, though it was common according to the nature of the body, yet was it peculiar in respect of

¹ It is supposed that the first Psalm has reference to him: “Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly.”
St. Jerome, Cat. Aur.

² St. Chrysostom, *in loc.*

power. And Christ is rightly buried in the tomb of the just, that He may rest in the habitation of justice. The just man hews out this monument with the piercing word in hearts of Gentile hardness, that the power of Christ might extend over the nations. And very rightly is there a stone rolled against the tomb; for whoever has in his heart truly buried Christ, must diligently guard lest he lose Him, or lest there be an entrance for unbelief^h.

And there was Mary Magdalene, and the other Mary, sitting over against the sepulchre.

For what purpose do these wait by the sepulchre? As yet they knew nothing great and high, as was meet, about Him, wherefore also they had brought ointments, and were waiting at the tomb, so that if the madness of the Jews should relax, they might go and embrace the Body. Seest thou women's courage? seest thou their affection? seest thou their noble spirit as to money? their noble spirit even unto death? Let us men imitate the women.

Now the next day that followed the day of the preparation, the chief priests and Pharisees came together unto Pilate, saying, Sir, we remember that that deceiver said, while He was yet alive, After three days I will rise again. Command therefore that the sepulchre be made sure until the third day, lest His disciples come by night and steal Him away, and say to the people, He is risen from the dead: so the last error shall be worse than the first.

Everywhere deceit recoils upon itself, and against its will supports the truth. And observe: it was necessary for it to be believed that He died, and that He was buried, and that He rose again; and all these things are brought to pass by His enemies. See, at any rate, these words bearing witness to every one of these facts. *We remember, these are the words, that that deceiver said, while He was yet alive, (He was therefore*

^h St. Ambrose in Cat. Luke.

now dead,) *After three days I will rise again. Command therefore that the sepulchre be sealed, (He was therefore buried,) lest His disciples come and steal Him away.* So that, if the sepulchre be sealed, there will be no unfair dealing; for there could not be. The proof, then, of His Resurrection has become incontrovertible; for if there was no unfair dealing, and the sepulchre was found empty, it is manifest that He is risen. Seest thou how even against their will they contend for the proof of the truth¹?

They said to Pilate, *that deceiver*; by this name the Lord Jesus Christ was called, for the comfort of His disciples when they are called deceivers².

What, then, saith Pilate? *Ye have a watch; go your way, and make it as sure as you can. And they made it sure, sealing the stone, and setting a watch.*

Pilate will not suffer that the soldiers alone should seal. For as having learnt the truth concerning Christ, he is no longer willing to be partner in the acts of the rulers, and says, Seal it as ye will yourselves, that ye may not be able to accuse others. For had the soldiers alone sealed, they might have said that the soldiers had suffered the disciples to steal the body, and so given the disciples a handle to forge a tale concerning the Resurrection; but this could they not say now, when they themselves had sealed the sepulchre.

Seest thou how against their will they labour for the truth? For they themselves came to Pilate, themselves asked, themselves sealed, themselves set the watch, so as to be at once accusers and refuters of the accusation. And, indeed, when should the disciples have stolen Him? on the Sabbath? And how? For it was not lawful so much as for a man to go out of his place¹. And even if they were willing to transgress the Law, how should they, who were so timid,

¹ St. Chrysostom.

² St. Augustine on Ps. lxiv. 8.

¹ Exod. xvi. 29.

have dared to come forth? And how could they also have been able to persuade the multitude? By saying what? by doing what? and with what sort of zeal could they have stood in behalf of the dead? expecting what recompense? what requital? Seeing Him yet alive and merely seized, they had fled; and after His death were they likely to speak boldly in His behalf, unless He had risen again? And how should these things be reasonable? For that they were neither willing nor able to feign a resurrection that did not take place, is plain from hence. He discoursed to them much of a Resurrection, and continually said, as indeed these very men have stated, *After three days I will rise again.* If, therefore, He rose not again, it is quite clear that these men (having been deceived and having made enemies of their whole nation for His sake, and come to be without home and without city,) would have abhorred Him, and would not have been willing to invest Him with so much glory. And that they would not even have been able to make the Resurrection to be believed, unless it had been true, this does not so much as need an argument.

For in what were they confident? In the shrewdness of their reasonings? Nay, of all men they were the most unlearned. But in the abundance of their possessions? Nay, they had neither staff nor shoes. But in the distinction of their race? Nay, they were mean, and of mean ancestry. In the greatness of their country? Nay, they were from obscure places. But in their own numbers? Nay, they were not more than eleven, and they were scattered abroad. But in their Master's promises? What kind of promises? For if He were not risen again, neither would those be likely to be trusted. And how should they endure a frantic people? For if the chief of them endured not the speech of a woman keeping the door, and if all the rest, too, on seeing Him bound, were scattered abroad, how should they have thought to

run to the ends of the earth, and plant a feigned tale of a Resurrection? For if Peter stood not a woman's threat, nor the others so much as the sight of bonds, how were they able to stand against kings, and rulers, and people; against swords, and gridirons, and furnaces, and ten thousand deaths day by day, unless they had the aid of the Power and Grace of Him Who rose again? Such miracles, and so many, were done, and none of these things did the Jews regard, but crucified Him Who had done them; and were they likely to believe His disciples at their mere word about a Resurrection? These things are not, they are not so, but the might of Him Who rose again brought them to pass.

But mark, I pray thee, their craft, how ridiculous it is: *We remember, these are their words, that that deceiver said, while He was yet alive, After three days I will rise again.* Yet if He were a deceiver, and boastfully uttered falsehoods, why are ye afraid, and run to and fro, and use so much diligence? "We are afraid," it is replied, "lest perchance the disciples steal Him away, and deceive the multitude." And yet this has been proved to have no probability at all. Malice, however, is ever contentious and shameless, and attempts what is unreasonable.

And they command it to be made sure for three days, as contending for doctrines, and being minded to prove that before that time also He was a deceiver, and they extend their malice even to His tomb. For this reason, then, He rose sooner, that they might not say that He spake falsely, and was stolen; for this, His rising sooner, was open to no charge, but to be later would have been full of suspicion. For indeed if he had not risen while they were sitting there and watching, but when they had withdrawn after the three days, then they would have had something to say against it, although foolishly. For this reason, then, He anticipated the time. For it was meet the Resurrection should take place while they were sitting

by watching. For this reason also He allowed them to seal it, as they were minded, and to set soldiers around it.

And they cared not about doing these things, and working on the Sabbath-day, but they looked to one object only, even their own wicked purpose, as though by that they were to succeed. This was a proof of extreme folly, and of the fear by which they were now greatly dismayed. For they who seized Him when living, are afraid of Him when dead. And yet if He had been a mere man, they had reason to have taken courage at His death. But that they might learn that what He endured when living He endured of His own will, behold now a seal, a stone, and a watch, and they are not able to hold Him ^m.

^m St. Chrysostom.

EASTER DAY.

THE EPISTLE.

COLOSSIANS iii. 1—7.

“If ye then be risen with Christ,” &c.

If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God.

Wonderful! How hath Paul led our minds aloft! How hath he filled them with mighty aspirations! It was not enough to say, *seek those things which are above*, nor even “where Christ is,” but he adds, *where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God*. Henceforward he would have them look from thence upon the earth.

Set your affections on things above, not on things on the earth: for ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God. When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with Him in glory.

This is not your life, he saith, your life is another than this. He is now urgent to remove them, and insists upon shewing that they are dead and are seated above; from both considerations establishing the position that they are not to seek the things that are here. For whether ye be dead, ye ought not to seek these things, or whether ye be above, ye ought not to seek them. Doth Christ appear? Neither, then, doth your life. It is in God, above. What then? When shall we live? When Christ shall appear, who is your life, then seek ye glory, then life, then enjoyment.

Our first man is buried: buried not in earth but in water; not death destroyed, but buried by death's destroyer; not by the law of nature, but by the governing command that is stronger than nature. For

what has been done by nature, may perchance be undone; but what has been done by His command shall never be undone. Nothing is more blessed than this burial, whereat all are rejoicing, men and Angels, and the Lord of Angels. At this burial, no need is there of coffin, nor of funeral vestments. Wouldst thou see the type of this burial? I will shew thee a pool wherein the one was buried, the other raised. In the Red Sea^a the Egyptians were sunk beneath it, but the Israelites went up from out of it; the same act buries the one, generates the other.

Mortify therefore your members, he saith, *which are upon the earth*. What sayest thou? Was it not thou that saidst, "Ye are buried, ye are buried together with Him; ye are circumcised, ye have put off the body of the sins of the flesh^b;" how, then, again sayest thou *mortify*^c? Art thou jesting? Dost thou thus discourse as though those evil things were still in us? There is no contradiction; but like one who has clean scoured a statue that was filthy, (or rather, who has re-cast it and displayed it in fresh brightness,) and saith that the rust is now eaten off and destroyed, and yet recommendeth diligence in again clearing away the rust; so he doth not contradict himself, for it is not that rust which he scoured off which he recommends should be cleared away, but that which grows afterwards. So it is not that former putting to death he speaks of, nor those former sins, but those which do afterwards grow^d.

[In another place] the Lord saith that a man needeth to wash his feet, even he that is washed. What doth this mean think ye, my brethren, but that the man in Baptism is indeed washed every whit, not excepting the feet, but the whole man altogether. Yet seeing that thereafter we have to live in the midst of

^a See the Epistle for the Ninth Sunday after Trinity.

^b Colos. ii. 11, 12; Rom. vi. 4.

^c i.e., put to death.

^d St. Chrysostom, *in loc.*

human affairs, of course we tread upon the earth. Therefore our human affections themselves, without which in this mortal state we cannot live, are as the feet, wherein we are affected by human affairs. And so affected that, "if we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us^a." Every day, therefore, He washes our feet, Who intercedeth for us; and that we do every day need to wash our feet, that is, to direct our spiritual steps, we confess also in the Lord's Prayer, when we say, "Forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors." For if, as it is written, we confess our sins, doubtless He Who washed the feet of His disciples, "is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness^b;" to cleanse us even to the feet, wherewith we move to and fro upon the earth^c.

Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry^d.

But is it to be believed that they who were already dead, and their life *hidden with Christ in God*, were still committing these sinful acts, were still living in unclean habits and works, were still slaves to evil passions, to lusts and covetousness? What madman would thus think of such? What, therefore, would Paul that they *mortify*, save the motions themselves still living in a certain intrusion of their own, without the consent of the mind, without the action of the members of the body? And how are they mortified, save when we consent not to them with the mind, nor are the members of the body yielded to them as weapons; and, what is greater, our very thought itself, although in a certain way it be touched by their suggestion, and, as it were, whisper, yet turns away from these, that it receive not delight from them, and turns to more delightful thoughts of things above:

^a 1 John i. 8.

^b Ibid. ver. 9.

^c St. Augustine.

^d See Epistle for the Third Sunday in Lent.

Paul only on this account naming them in his discourse, that men may not abide in them, but flee from them. And this is brought to pass if we listen effectually, with His help, Who through His Apostles gives this command, *Seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affections on things above, not on things of the earth*¹.

For which things' sake the wrath of God cometh on the children of disobedience.

By many considerations Paul had been withdrawing his hearers from these things, by that of benefits already given, and of deliverance from future evils, and by others, as by the consideration of who we once were and in what circumstances, and the manner and terms of our deliverance. Those were enough; but this of *the wrath of God* is of greater force than they all; unpleasing indeed to speak of, but not useless, rather of the greatest use to us. *For which things' sake*, he saith, *the wrath of God cometh upon the children of disobedience.* He said not, "upon you," but, *upon the children of disobedience*; so calling such sinners to deprive them of all excuse, and to shew that it was because they would not be obedient, that they were in that condition.

In the which ye also walked some time, when ye lived in them.

In order to shame them, he saith, *when ye lived in them*; and also implying praise, as now no more so living².

¹ St. Augustine.

² St. Chrysostom, in loc.

THE GOSPEL.

ST. JOHN **xx.** 1—10.

“The first day of the week cometh Mary Magdalene,” &c.

The first day of the week (that is, the Lord's day) cometh Mary Magdalene early, when it was yet dark¹, unto the sepulchre, and seeth the stone taken away from the sepulchre.

He arose while both stone and seals lay over Him; but because it was necessary that others should be fully satisfied, the tomb was opened after the Resurrection, and thus what was come to pass was confirmed. This, then, was what moved Mary. For being entirely full of loving affection towards her Master, when the Sabbath was past, she could not bear to rest, but came very early in the morning, desiring to find some consolation from the place. But when she saw the place, and saw the stone taken away, she neither entered in nor stooped down, but ran to the disciples, in the greatness of her longing; for this was what she earnestly desired, speedily to learn what had become of the Body. This was the meaning of her mourning, and her words declare it.

They have taken away, she saith, the Lord out of the sepulchre, and we know not where they have laid Him.

Seest thou how she knew not as yet anything clearly concerning the Resurrection, but thought there had been a removal of the Body, and tells all simply to the disciples^m? And the Evangelist hath not deprived the woman of such praise, nor thought it shame that the disciples should have learnt these things first from her who had passed the night in watching. Thus

¹ It is well said, *when it was yet dark*: Mary was seeking the Creator of all things in the tomb, and because she found Him not, thought that He was stolen. Truly it was yet dark when she came to the sepulchre.—St. Gregory in Cat. Aur. ^m St. John **xx.** 3—7.

everywhere doth the truth-loving nature of John's disposition shine forth. When, then, she came and said these things, they hearing them, ran with great eagerness to the sepulchre, and *saw the linen clothes lying*, which was a proof of the Resurrection. For neither, if any persons had removed the Body, would they before doing so have stripped It; nor if any had stolen It, would they have taken the trouble to remove the napkin, and roll it up, and lay it in a place by itself; but they would have taken the Body as It was. John tells us by anticipation, that It was buried with much myrrh, which glues linen to the body not less firmly than lead, in order that when thou hearest that the napkin lay apart, thou mayest not endure those who say that He was stolen; for a thief would not have been so foolish as to spend so much trouble on a superfluous matter. For why should he undo the clothes? and how could he have escaped detection if he had done so, since he would probably have spent much time in doing it, and have been found out by such delay? But why do the clothes lie apart, while the napkin was wrapped together by itself? That thou mayest learn that the putting some in one place, some in another, was not the work of men in haste or confusion. From this they believed in the Resurrection. On this account Christ afterwards appeared to them, when they were convinced by what they had seen. Observe here, again, the absence of boastfulness in the Evangelist; how he witnesses to the exactness of Peter's search. He himself having gotten before Peter, and having seen the linen clothes, enquired not farther, but withdrew; but that fervent one passing in, looked at everything carefully, and saw somewhat more, and then the other too was summoned to the sight ⁿ.

“Be glad, O Jerusalem, and hold festival together

ⁿ St. Chrysostom, *in loc.*

all ye who love Jesus °," for He is risen; "rejoice all ye who before mourned," hearing the reckless deeds and enormities of the Jews. For He Who was maltreated of them with insult here, is risen again; and as the lecture upon the Cross was one of pain, so now let the good tidings of the Resurrection gladden all present. Let mourning be turned into gladness, and lamentation into joy; and let our mouth be filled with joy and gladness, because of Him Who after His Resurrection said, "Rejoice P!" For I know the sorrows of the lovers of Christ during the days past; since, our words having ended at His death and burial, and not having told the good tidings of the Resurrection, their mind was kept in suspense to hear what they longed for. Now therefore the Dead is risen; He Who was "free among the dead," and Deliverer of the dead; He Whose Head, by reason of His patience, was bound in scorn with the crown of thorns, has now, being risen, put on the diadem of His victory over death.

I believe that Christ was raised from the dead, for I have many testimonies of this, both from the divine Scriptures, and from the operative power even at this day of Him Who arose,—Who descended into hell alone, but Who ascended thence with a great company; for He went down alone to death, and many bodies of the saints which slept arose through Him.

Death was struck with dismay on beholding a new Visitant descending into Hades, not bound by the chains of that place. Wherefore, O ye porters of Hades, when ye saw Him, were ye scared? What unwonted fear seized you? Death fled, and his flight betrayed his cowardice. The holy prophets ran unto Him, and Moses the Lawgiver, and Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob; David also, and Samuel, and Esaias, and John the Baptist, who bore witness when he asked, "Art thou He that should come, or do we look for

° Isa. lx. 10, Sept.

P St. Matt. xxviii. 9.

another^a?" All the just were ransomed, whom death had devoured; for it behoved the King Who had been heralded, to become the Redeemer of His noble heralds. Then each of the just said, "O Death, where is thy sting? O Grave, where is thy victory^r?" For the Conqueror hath redeemed us^s.

^a St. Matt. xi. 3.
Catechetical Lectures.

^r 1 Cor. xv. 55.

^s St. Cyril,

MONDAY IN EASTER WEEK.

FOR THE EPISTLE.

ACTS x. 34—43.

“Then Peter opened his mouth,” &c.

Then Peter opened his mouth, and said, Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons.

This Peter said by way of justifying himself to the Jews then present. For being at the point to commit the Word to Gentiles, he first puts this by way of apology. But was He then *a respecter of persons* before-time? God forbid! It was just the same in time past; every one fearing Him and working righteousness would be accepted with Him, as where Paul speaketh of “the Gentiles which have not the Law, and do by nature the things of the Law^a;” so also here Peter; *but in every nation he that feareth Him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with Him.*

Peter declareth that, be a man circumcised or be he uncircumcised, *he that feareth God, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with God.* What, then, (it may be asked,) “is the man yonder in Persia *accepted with Him?*” If he be worthy, in this regard he is accepted, that it should be granted him to be brought unto faith. If God overlooked not the Magi, nor the eunuch from Ethiopia, nor the thief, nor the harlot, much more shall He in no wise overlook them that work righteousness, and are of a good will.

“What, then, shall we say of the case of religious

^a Rom. ii. 14.

men who have been overlooked?" It is not true that any such have ever been overlooked. Peter saith that God rejects no man in any nation, *who feareth Him, and worketh righteousness*, meaning by *righteousness* all virtue ^b.

But if any should say, "How is it that such an one, kind as he is, and good, and humane, continues in error?" I answer, that he has some fault of a different kind,—vain-glory, or sluggishness of mind, or want of earnestness about his salvation, accounting all the circumstances of his life to be mere chance-medley and hap-hazard. But by *him that worketh righteousness*, Peter means, him that is blameless in all things. "How is it, then," you will say, "that impure persons have been accounted worthy to have the Gospel preached to them?" Because they were willing and desirous. Thus some, though in error, are attracted by Him because they are clean from passions; and others, coming of their own accord, He repulses not; many also even from their ancestors have received the true religion ^c.

Then, that the Jews may not seem to be in the condition of persons cast off, he adds,

The word which God sent unto the children of Israel, preaching peace by Jesus Christ; (He is Lord of all.) Thus giving the children of Israel the pre-eminence, and, as it were, persuading them also to receive his doctrine. Then he calls the Gentiles as witnesses, and proves that *He is Lord of all* by the things which He did throughout all Judæa.

That word, I say, ye know, which was published throughout all Judæa, and began from Galilee, after the baptism which John preached; how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost, and with power.

He does not mean, "Ye know Jesus," for they did not know Him; but he speaks of the things done by Him:—

^b St. Chrys. Hom., in loc.

^c St. Chrys., Hom. viii. in 1 Cor.

Who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil : for God was with Him.

By this Peter shews that many cases of lost senses or paralysed limbs are the devil's work, and a wretch given to the body by him, as Christ also Himself had said ; and the greatness of His power was shewn in His overcoming of the devil, as also spake the Jews : " We know that Thou art a teacher come from God : for none can do these miracles, except God be with Him^d."

And we are witnesses of all things which He did, both in the land of the Jews, and in Jerusalem ; both we, saith he, and you are witnesses.

Whom they also slew, and hanged on a tree.

When Peter had shewn that Christ was sent from God, he next speaks of this, that He was slain. Seest thou how far they are from hiding the Cross from view ?

Him God raised up the third day, and shewed Him openly ; not to all the people, but unto witnesses chosen before of God.

It was Christ Himself that elected them, yet this also he refers to God ;

Even to us, who did eat and drink with Him after He rose from the dead.

See whence he fetches his assurance of the Resurrection. What is the reason that being risen He did no sign, but only ate and drank ? Because the Resurrection itself was a great sign, and of this nothing was so much a proof as the eating and drinking^e.

And He commanded us to preach unto the people, and to testify that it is He Who was ordained of God to be the Judge of quick and dead.

This he saith so as to alarm them, and that they may not have it in their power to fall back upon the excuse of ignorance. And he does not here speak of Christ as the Son of God, but what would most

^d St. John iii. 2.

^e See the Gospel.

alarm them, as of Him *Who is ordained of God to be the Judge of quick and dead*: and when he has agitated them with terror, then he brings in the pardon, not spoken from himself, but from the Prophets:—

To Him give all the Prophets witness, that through His Name whosoever believeth in Him shall receive remission of sins.

Thus, from Peter proceeds what is in its nature terrifying, from the Prophets that which is mild and encouraging.

All ye that have received this forgiveness, all ye to whom it has been vouchsafed to attain unto faith, learn, I beseech you, the greatness of the gift, and study not to be insolent to your Benefactor. For we obtained forgiveness, not that we should become worse, but that we should become better and more excellent. Let none say that God is the cause of evil doings, in that He did not punish, nor take vengeance on the doer. See how we expose God to the tongues of the wicked. For what do they not say, what leave unuttered? “God Himself,” say they, “allowed these evil doers: for He ought to have punished them as they deserved, not to honour them, nor crown, nor admit them to the foremost privileges, but to punish and take vengeance upon them; but He that, instead of this, honours them, has made them to be such as they are.” Do not, I beseech and implore you, do not let any man utter such speeches with regard to us. Better to be buried ten thousand times over, than that God through us should be so spoken of! The Jews, we read, reviled and reproached Christ Himself, but this reproach is more grievous, that through us He should be called a teacher of wickedness. Let us cause the very opposite to be said, by having our conversation worthy of Him that calleth us, and worthily approaching the Baptism of adoption. For great, indeed, is the power of Baptism: it makes them that

partake of the Gift, quite other men than they were; it does not let the men be men and nothing more. Make thou the Gentile to believe, that great is the might of the Spirit, that it has new-moulded, that it has fashioned thee anew. Why waitest thou for the last gasp, like a runaway slave, like a malefactor, as though it were not thy duty to live unto God? Why dost thou stand affected to Him, as if thou hadst in Him a ruthless, cruel Master? What can be more heartless, what more miserable, than to make that the time to receive Baptism? God has made thee a friend, and vouchsafed thee all His good things, that thou mayest act the part of a friend. Suppose you had done some man the greatest wrong, had insulted him, and brought upon him disgrace without end; suppose you had fallen into the hands of the person so wronged, and he, in return for all this, had honoured you, made you partaker of all that he had, and in the assembly of his friends, of those in whose presence he was insulted, had crowned you, and declared that he would hold you as his own begotten son, and then straightway had died; say, would you not have bewailed him? would you not have deemed his death a calamity? would you not have said, Would that he were alive, that I might have it in my power to make the fit return, that I might requite him, that I might shew myself not base to my benefactor? So then, when it is but man, this is how you would act; and when it is God, are you eager to be gone, that you may not requite your benefactor for so great gifts? Nay, rather, so choose the time for coming to Him, that you shall have it in your power to requite Him like for like. True, say you, but I cannot keep the Gift. Has God commanded impossibilities? Hence it is that all is clean reversed, hence that, all the world over, everything is marred,—because nobody makes it his mark to live after God. Thus those who are yet catechumens, because they make this their object, how they may defer Baptism to

the last, give themselves no concern about leading an upright life : and those who have been baptized, whether it be because they received it as children, or whether it be that having received it in sickness, and afterwards recovered, they had no hearty desire to live on to the glory of God, so it is that neither do those make an earnest business of it ; nay, even such as received it in health, have little enough to shew of any good impression, and though warmly affected for the time, these also presently let the fire go out. Fear the uncertainty of the future. “As a thief in the night,” so death comes ; and not merely as a thief, but while we sleep it sets upon us, and carries us off while we are idling. To this end has God made the future uncertain, that we may spend our time in the practice of virtue, because of the uncertainty of life. Make the right use of the health of the body in order to the health of the soul. But you will say, What is the use to me of labour and toil, when it is in my power to get quit of all my sins without labour ? In the first place, this is not certain. It may happen that a person not only does not get quit of his sins without labour, but that he departs hence with all his sins upon him. However, even if this were certain, still your argument is not to be tolerated. He has drawn thee to the contest ; the golden arms lie there. When you ought to take them and to handle them, you wish to be ingloriously saved without doing any good work ! Say, if war broke out, and the emperor were here, and you saw some charging into the midst of the phalanxes of the enemy, hewing them down, dealing wounds by thousands, others thrusting with the sword’s point, others bounding now here now there, others dashing on horseback, and these praised by the emperor, admired, applauded, crowned : others, on the contrary, thinking themselves well off if they take no harm, and keeping in the hindmost ranks, and sitting idly there : then, after the close of the war, the former sort summoned,

honoured with the greatest gifts, their names proclaimed by the heralds,—while of the latter, not even the name becomes known, and their reward is only that they are safe: to which sort would you wish to belong? Why, if you were made of stone, if you were more stupid even than senseless and lifeless things, would you not ten thousand times rather belong to the former? Yea, I beseech and implore you. For if need were to fall fighting, ought you not eagerly to choose this? See you not how it is with them that have fallen in the wars, how illustrious they are, how glorious? And yet they die a death, after which there is no getting honour from the emperor. But in that other war, thou shalt in any wise be presented with thy scars; which scars, even without persecution, may it be granted all us to exhibit, through Jesus Christ our Lord, with Whom to the Father and the Holy Ghost together be glory, dominion, honour, now and ever, and world without end. Amen¹.

THE GOSPEL.

ST. LUKE XXIV. 13—35.

“Behold, two of His disciples went that same day to a village called Emmaus,” &c.

Behold, two of His disciples went that same day to a village called Emmaus, which was from Jerusalem about threescore furlongs. And they talked together of all those things which had happened. And it came to pass, that, while they communed together, and reasoned, Jesus Himself drew near, and went with them. But their eyes were holden that they should not know Him. And He said unto them, What manner of communications are these that ye have one to another, as ye walk, and are sad? And

¹ St. Chrysostom.

the one of them, whose name was Cleopas, answering, said unto Him, Art Thou only a stranger in Jerusalem, and hast not known the things which are come to pass there in these days? And He said unto them, What things? And they said unto Him, Concerning Jesus of Nazareth, which was a Prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people: and how the chief priests and our rulers delivered Him to be condemned to death, and have crucified Him. But we trusted that it had been He which should have redeemed Israel: and beside all this, to-day is the third day since these things were done.

Our Lord and Saviour both died for us, and rose again for us; He died, that is, for our offences, rose again for our justification. Ye have just heard concerning the two disciples whom He met with in the way, how *their eyes were holden that they should not know Him*; and He found them despairing of the redemption that was in Christ, and deeming that now He had suffered and was dead as a man, not accounting that as Son of God He ever liveth; and deeming, too, that He was so dead in the flesh as not to come to life again^s.

By a robber the Apostles were excelled, for he believed at the time when they failed. See the members of Christ despairing, when *their eyes were holden that they should not know Him*. How should they with their eyes know Him concerning whom they had come to waver in their mind? They had hoped, but were now not hoping^h.

They had already lost their hope in Christ, for they said not, "We hope that He shall redeem Israel," but, *We hoped that it had been He that should have redeemed Israel*. He was with them in Person, and hope in Him was not in their heartsⁱ.

Then He opened to them the Scriptures:—

Then said He unto them, O fools, and slow of heart to

^s St. Aug. on 1 St. John ii.

^h St. Aug., Ps. lxi.

ⁱ Ibid., Ps. xcvi.

believe all that the prophets have spoken : ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into His glory ! And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, He expounded unto them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself.

Shewing them that all that He had suffered had been foretold, lest they should be more staggered if the Lord should rise again, and not believe Him, if these things had not been foretold concerning Him. For the firm foundation of faith is in this, that all things which came to pass in Christ were foretold¹.

And they drew nigh unto the village, whither they went : and He made as though He would have gone further. But they constrained Him, saying, Abide with us : for it is toward evening, and the day is far spent. And He went in to tarry with them.

The Evangelist, in saying *He feigned*¹, hath said that which gives great delight to liars, as enabling them to lie with impunity : as if all feigning were a lie, whereas, without breach of truth, many things use to be feigned, for the sake of signifying one thing by another. If there had been nothing signified by Jesus, in that He feigned to be going further, with reason might it be judged to be a lie ; but if it be rightly understood and referred to that which He willed to signify, then is it not a lie, but a mystery ; otherwise may all things be called lies which, although they never were done, are related to have been done, on account of a certain similitude to the things to be signified,—as the parables of Christ, and the fables of Horace and of Æsop, and that in the Book of Judges. Whoso, then, would understand what Christ by feigning that did prefigure, let him attend to that which He by acting did effect. For when afterwards He did go further, above all heavens, yet deserted He not His disciples. In order to signify that which

¹ St. Aug., 1 St. John ii.
Vulgate, *fecit*.

¹ E. V., “made as though ;”

afterwards He did as God, He feigned now to do this as man. Therefore that feigning was a veritable signification, because of the verity which did follow. Let him, therefore, contend that Christ did lie by feigning, who denieth that He fulfilled in act that which He signified^m?

And He went in to tarry with them.

Now behold Christ, since He is received through His members, so He seeks His receivers through Himself. They lay out a table, they bring food; and God, whom they had not known in the expounding of Scripture, they knew in the breaking of bread, for it follows:—

And it came to pass, as He sat at meat with them, He took bread, and blessed it, and brake, and gave to them. And their eyes were opened, and they knew Himⁿ.

And truly he that eateth and drinketh not judgment to himself, doth, in the breaking of bread, know Christ^o.

Their eyes were opened.

This is not said of their bodily eyes, but of their mental sight^p.

They walked not with their eyes closed, but there was something within them which did not permit them to know that which they saw. Not that the Lord was not able to transform His Flesh that it should be really a different form from that which they were accustomed to behold, since, in fact, before His Passion He was transfigured, so that His Face was bright as the sun. But it was not so now. We do not unfitly take this obstacle in the sight to have been caused by Satan, in order that Jesus might not be known; but still it was so permitted by Christ up to the sacrament of the bread, that by partaking of the unity of His Body, the obstacle of the enemy might be understood to be removed, so that Christ might be known^q.

^m St. Aug., *Contra Mendacium*.

ⁿ St. Greg., *Cat. Aur.*

^o St. Aug., St. John.

^p St. Chrysostom, *Cat. Aur.*

^q St. Aug., *Cat. Aur.*

They who put off the knowledge of this Sacrament, Christ goeth further from them. Let them rather hold It fast, and not let Him go; let them invite Him to their house, and so they are invited to heaven¹.

And they said one to another, Did not our heart burn within us, while He talked with us by the way, and while He opened to us the Scriptures?

By the word which is heard the spirit is kindled, the chill of dulness departs, the mind becomes awakened with heavenly desire. It rejoices to hear heavenly precepts, and every command in which it is instructed, is, as it were, adding a faggot to the fire².

And they rose up the same hour, and returned to Jerusalem, and found the eleven gathered together, and them that were with them, saying, The Lord is risen indeed, and hath appeared to Simon. And they told what things were done in the way, and how He was known to them in breaking of bread.

He did not shew Himself to all at the same time, in order that He might sow the seeds of faith. For he who had first seen and was sure, told it to the rest. Afterwards, the word going forth prepared the mind of the hearer for the sight, and therefore He appeared first to him who was of all the most worthy and faithful. For He had need of the most faithful soul to first receive this sight, that it might be the least disturbed by the unexpected appearance. And therefore He is first seen by Peter, that he who first confessed Christ should first deserve to see His Resurrection, and also because he had denied Him, He wished to see him first, to console him, lest he should despair. But after Peter, He appeared unto the rest, at one time fewer in number, at another more³.

Sad were the disciples at the Lord being crucified: overcome with sadness, sorrowing they departed, they

¹ St. Aug., Ser. xxxix.
in Cat. Anr.

² St. Gregory in Cat.

³ St. Chrys.

thought they had lost hope. He rose again, even when appearing to them He found them sad. He held the eyes of two men that walked in the way, so that He was not known by them, and He found them sighing and lamenting; and He held them until He had expounded the Scriptures, and by the same Scriptures had shewn that all ought to have been done as it was done. For He shewed in the Scriptures, how after the third day it behoved the Lord to rise again. And how would He have risen again on the third day if He had come down from the Cross? Now ye that are sad in the way, if at the Jews' reviling ye had seen the Lord come down from the Cross, how much would ye have been elated! Ye would have rejoiced that He had so stopped the mouth of the Jews. Await the design of the Physician; in that He descendeth [not], in that He willeth to be slain, He is compounding an antidote. Behold now He hath risen again, behold now He speaketh, not yet is He known, in order that He may be the more joyfully known. Afterwards He openeth their eyes in the breaking of bread. It was told one that was more hard-hearted^u, "The Lord hath been seen; the Lord is risen again;" and yet he is sad, he believeth not. "Except I shall have put forth," he saith, "my hand, and shall have touched the scars of the nails, I will not believe." There is presented even the Body to be touched; he thrusteth out the hand, handleth, crieth out, "My Lord and my God." Those just men^x, therefore, that saw, touched, and believed, rejoiced in the Lord; what of the just that now are? Because they see not, because they touch not, rejoice they not in the Lord? Where is that voice of the Lord to Thomas? "Because thou hast seen Me thou hast believed; blessed are they that have not seen, and have believed." Therefore let us all rejoice in the Lord, let us all,

^u St. John xx. 25.
the Lord," Ps. lxiv.

^x "The righteous shall rejoice in

after the faith, be ONE JUST MAN^y, and let us all in one Body hold One Head, and let us rejoice in the Lord. Let no one rejoice in himself, no one rely on himself, no one despair of himself; let no one rely on any man whom he ought to bring in to be the partner of his own hope, not the giver of the hope*.

^y Referring to Ps. lxiv. 10.

* St. Augustine on Ps. lxiv.

TUESDAY IN EASTER WEEK.

THE EPISTLE.

ACTS xiii. 26—41.

“Men and brethren,” &c.

and brethren, children of the stock of Abraham, whosoever among you feareth God, to you is the word of salvation sent.

they that dwell at Jerusalem, and their rulers, because they knew Him not, nor yet the voices of the prophets which are read every sabbath-day, they have fulfilled in condemning Him.

and brethren, children of the stock of Abraham,—as them after their father,—to you is the word of salvation sent. Here the expression, to you, does mean, “to you Jews,” but it gives them a right to defend themselves from those who dared that murder. What he adds, shews this plainly. For, he says, they that dwell at Jerusalem, have condemned Him, because they knew Him not. How, you will say, could they be ignorant, with John to tell them? But why, seeing they were ignorant with all the prophets continually crying aloud to them? It follows another charge.

though they found no cause of death in Him, in their ignorance had nothing to do, yet desired they that He should be slain. For let us put the case, they did not hold Him to be the Christ; why did they kill Him?

when they had fulfilled all that was written of the Messiah, they took Him down from the tree, and laid Him in the tomb.

Observe what a point he makes of shewing that the whole was a divine dispensation, and see, by what did the Apostles persuade men? By telling them that He was crucified? Why, what could be less persuasive than this? That He was buried—by them to whom it was promised that He should be salvation? that He who was buried forgives sins, yea, more than the Law hath power to do? *God hath raised up Jesus again.*

But God raised Him from the dead: and He was seen many days of them which came up with Him from Galilee to Jerusalem, who are His witnesses to the people,—(His witnesses unto the people,—the people that saw Him. Who would never have been so, had they not been strengthened by a divine power; for they would never have borne such witness to bloodthirsty men, to the very persons who killed Him.)—And we declare unto you glad tidings, how that the promise which was made unto the fathers, God hath fulfilled the same unto us their children, in that He hath raised up Jesus again; as it is also written in the second Psalm, Thou art My Son, this day have I begotten Thee.

And as concerning that He raised Him up from the dead, now no more to return to corruption, He said on this wise, I will give you the sure mercies of David. Wherefore He saith also in another Psalm, Thou shalt not suffer Thine Holy One to see corruption. For David, after he had served his own generation by the will of God, fell on sleep, and was laid unto his fathers, and saw corruption: but He Whom God raised up saw no corruption.

He hath raised up Jesus again. This day, He says, I have begotten Thee. Aye, upon this the rest follows of course. Why did he not allege some text by which they would be persuaded that forgiveness of sins is by Him? Because the great point was to shew, in the first place, that He was risen; this being acknowledged, the other was unquestionable.

Be it known unto you therefore, men and brethren, that

through this Man is preached unto you forgiveness of sins: and by Him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses.

Through this Man, nay more, by Him is remission of sins. He wished to bring them to a longing desire of this great thing. And observe, he does not say, "justified from things from which ye would not," but, "from which ye could not be justified by the Law of Moses." Every one, he says: be he who he may. For those ordinances are of no use, unless there be some benefit accruing therefrom. This is why he brings in forgiveness, and shews the benefit to be the greater, when, the thing being otherwise impossible, yet by this is effected.

Well, then, His death was not dereliction, but fulfilling of prophecy.

Beware, therefore, lest that come upon you which is spoken in the Prophets; Behold, ye despisers, and wonder, and perish; for I work a work in your days, a work which ye shall in no wise believe, though a man declare it unto you.

He puts them in mind of historical facts, through ignorance of which they suffered evils without number. This he hints in the conclusion, saying, "Look, ye despisers, (ye who disbelieve in the Resurrection,) and behold. Let not that," he says, "come upon you which was spoken for the others, that, *I work a work which ye shall in no wise believe, though one declare it unto you.*

Marvel not that it seems incredible; this very thing was foretold from the first,—that the Resurrection would not be believed.

Behold, ye despisers! might with reason be said to us also. For the Church, indeed, is in very evil case, although ye think her affairs to be in peace. For the

mischievous of it is, that while we labour under so many evils, we do not even know that we have any. What sayest thou? We are in possession of our Churches, our Church property, and all the rest; the services are held, the congregation comes to Church every day. True, but one is not to judge of the state of a Church from these things. From what then? Whether there be piety, whether we return home with profit each day, whether reaping some fruit, be it much or little, whether we do it not merely by routine and for the formal acquittance of a duty. Who has become a better man by attending daily service for a whole month? That is the point: otherwise everything which seems to bespeak a flourishing condition of the Church does in fact bespeak an ill condition, when all this is done and nothing comes of it. Would to God that were all, that nothing comes of it; but, indeed, as things are, it turns out even for the worse. What fruit do ye get from your services? Surely, if you were getting any profit by them, ye ought to have been long leading a life of true wisdom, with so many Prophets twice in every week discoursing to you, so many Apostles and Evangelists, all setting forth the doctrines of salvation, and placing before you with much exactness, that which can form the character aright. The soldier, by going to his drill, becomes more perfect in his tactics: the wrestler, by frequenting the gymnastic ground, becomes more skilful in wrestling; the physician, by attending on his teacher, becomes more accurate, and knows more, and learns more; and thou—what hast thou gained? I speak not to those who have been members of the Church only for a year, but to those who from their earliest age have been attending the services. Think you that to be religious is to be constant in Church-going? This is nothing, unless we reap some fruit for ourselves; if from the gathering together in Church we do not gather something for ourselves, it were better to remain at home. For our forefathers

built the Churches for us, not just to bring us together from our private houses and shew us one to another,—since this could have been done also in a market-place, and in baths, and in a public procession,—but to bring together learners and teachers, and make the one better by means of the other. With us it has all become mere customary routine, and formal discharge of a duty; a thing we are used to, that is all. Easter comes, and a great stir, great hubbub, and crowding of—I had rather not call them human beings, for their behaviour is not commonly human. Easter goes, the tumult abates, but then the quiet which succeeds is again fruitless of good. “Vigils, and holy hymn singing.”—And what is got by these? Nay, it is all the worse. Many do so merely out of vanity. Think how sick at heart it must make me, to see it all like so much water poured into a cask with holes in it? But ye will assuredly say to me, “We know the Scriptures.” And what of that? If ye exemplify the Scriptures by your works, that is the gain, that the profit. The Church is a dyer’s vat; if time after time perpetually ye go hence without receiving any dye, what is the use of coming here continually? Why the mischief is all the greater. Why do I weary myself in vain, and talk uselessly, if ye are to remain in the same state, if the Church services work no good in you? “Nay,” ye will say, “we pray.” And what of that? “Not every one that saith unto Me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of My Father which is in heaven^a.” Many a time have I determined to hold my peace, seeing no benefit accruing to you from my word; or, perhaps, there does accrue some, but I, through insatiableness and strong desire, am affected in the same way as those that are mad after riches. For just as they, however much they may get, think they have nothing; so I, because I ardently desire your salva-

^a St. Matt. vii. 21.

tion, until I see you to have made good progress, think nothing done, because of my exceeding eager desire that you should arrive at the very summit. I would that this were the case, and that my eagerness were in fault, not your sloth; but I fear I conjecture but too rightly. For we must needs allow that if any benefit had arisen in all this length of time, we ought ere now to have done speaking. In such case, there were no need to you of words, since both in those already spoken there had been enough said to you, and you would be yourselves able to correct others. But the fact that there is still a necessity of our discoursing to you, only shews that matters with you are not in a state of high perfection. Then what would we have to be brought about? for one must not merely find fault. I beseech and entreat you not to think it enough to have invaded the Church, but that ye also withdraw hence, having taken somewhat, some medicine, for the curing of your own maladies; and if not from us, at any rate, in the Scriptures ye have the remedies suitable for each. For instance, is any passionate? Let him attend to the Scripture readings, and he will of a surety find such remedy either in history or exhortation. In exhortation, when it is said, "The sway of his fury shall be his destruction^b," and, "a passionate man is not seemly^c," and such like. And again, "A man full of words shall not prosper^d;" and Christ again, "Whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause^e;" and again, the Prophet, "Be ye angry and sin not^f," and, "Cursed be their anger, for it was fierce^g." And in histories, as when thou hearest of Pharaoh filled with much wrath, and the Assyrian. Again, is any one taken captive by love of money? Let him hear that "there is not a more wicked thing than a covetous man; for this man setteth even his own soul for sale^h;"

^b Eccles. i. 22.^c St. Matt. v. 22.^d Eccles. x. 9.^e Prov. xi. 25.^f Ps. iv. 4, Sept.^g Ps. cxi. 11, Sept.^h Gen. xlii. 7.

and how Christ saith, "Ye cannot serve God and mammonⁱ;" and the Apostle, that "the love of money is the root of all evil^k;" and the Prophets, "If riches increase, set not your heart upon them^l," and many other sayings. And from the histories thou hearest of Gehazi, Judas, the chief scribes, and that a "gift doth blind the eyes of the wise^m." Is another proud? Let him hear that "God resisteth the proudⁿ;" and, "Pride is the beginning of sin^o;" and, "Every one proud in heart is an abomination unto the Lord^p." And in the histories, the devil, and all the rest. In a word, since it is impossible to recount all, let each choose out from the Divine Scriptures the remedy for their own hurt. So wash out, if not the whole at once, a part at any rate; part to-day, and part to-morrow, and then the whole. And with regard to repentance, too, and confession, and almsgiving, and justice also, and temperance, and all other things, thou wilt find many examples. "For all these things," says the Apostle, "are written for our admonition^q." If, then, the Scripture in all its discoursing is for our admonition, let us attend to it as we ought. Why do we deceive ourselves in vain? I fear it may be said of us also, that "our days have fallen short in vanity, and our years with haste^r." Who from hearing us has given up the theatres? Who has given up his covetousness? Who has become more ready for almsgiving? I would wish to know this, not for the sake of vain-glory, but that I may be inspirited to more zeal, seeing the fruit of my labour. But as things now are, how shall I put my hand to the work, when I see that for all the rain of doctrine pouring down upon you shower after shower, still our crops remain at the same measure, and the plants have waxed none the higher? Anon the time of threshing is at hand, and He with

ⁱ St. Matt. vi. 24.^k 1 Tim. vi. 10.^l Ps. lxii. 10.^m Deut. xvi. 19.ⁿ James iv. 6.^o Eccles. x. 13.^p Prov. xvi. 5.^q 1 Cor. x. 11.^r Ps. lxxviii. 33, Sept.

His fan. I fear me, lest it be all stubble; I fear, lest we be all cast into the furnace. The summer is past, the winter is come: we sit, both young and old, taken captive by our own evil passions. Tell me not, I do not commit fornication: for what art thou the better if, though thou be no fornicator, thou art covetous? It matters not to the sparrow caught in the snare that he is not held tight in every part, but only by the foot; he is a lost bird for all that he has his wings free, so long as his foot is held tight. Just so thou art caught, not by fornication, but by love of money, but caught thou art nevertheless; and the point is, not *how* thou art caught, but *that* thou art caught. Let not the young man say, I am no money-lover; well, but perchance thou art a fornicator; and then, again, what art thou the better? For the fact is, it is not possible for all the passions to act upon us at once and the same time of life: they are divided and marked off, and that through the mercy of God, that they may not by assailing us all at once become insuperable, and so our wrestling with them be made more difficult. What wretched inertness it shews, not to be able to conquer our passions even when taken one by one, but to be defeated at each several period of our life, and yet to take credit to ourselves for those which let us alone, not in consequence of our own hearty endeavours, but merely because, by reason of the time of life, they are dormant? Look at the chariot-drivers, do you not see how exceedingly careful and strict they are with themselves in their training-practice, their labours, their diet, and all the rest, that they may not be thrown down from their chariots, and dragged along by the reins? See what a thing art is! Often even a strong man cannot master a single horse; but a mere boy, who has learnt the art, shall often take the pair in hand, and with ease lead them and drive them where he will. Nay, in India it is said that a huge monster of an elephant will yield to

a stripling of fifteen, who manages him with the utmost ease. To what purpose have I said all this? To shew that, if by dint of study and practice we can throttle into submission even elephants and wild horses, much more the passions within us. Whence is it that throughout life we continually fail in every encounter? We have never practised the art; never, in a time of leisure, when there is no contest, talked over with ourselves what shall be useful for us. We are never to be seen in our place on the chariot, until the time for the contest is actually come. Hence the ridiculous figure we make there. Have I not often said, Let us practise ourselves upon those of our own family before the time of trial? With our servants at home we are often exasperated, let us there quell our anger, that in our intercourse with our friends we may have it easily under control. And so, in the case of all the other passions, if we practised ourselves beforehand, we should not make a ridiculous figure in the contest itself. But now we have our implements, and our exercises, and our trainings for other things; for arts and feats of the palæstra, but for virtue nothing of the sort. The husbandman would not venture to meddle with a vine, unless he had first been practised in the culture of it; nor the pilot to sit at the helm, unless he had first practised himself well at it: but we, in all respects unpractised, wish for the first prizes. It were good to be silent, good to have no communication with any man in act or word, until we were able to charm the wild beast that is within us. The wild beast, I say; for, indeed, is it not worse than the attack of any wild beast, when wrath or lust make war upon us? Beware of invading the market-place with these beasts, until thou have got the muzzle well upon their mouths, until thou have tamed and made them tractable. Those who lead about their tame lions in the market-place, do you not see what a gain they make of it, what admiration they get, because in the irrational

beast they have succeeded in producing such tameness? But should the lion suddenly take a savage fit, how he scares all the people out of the marketplace, and then both the man that leads him about is himself in danger, and if there be loss of life to others, it is his doing. Well, then, do thou also first tame thy lion, and so lead him about, not for the purpose of receiving money, but that thou mayest acquire a gain to which there is none equal. For there is nothing equal to gentleness, which, both to those who possess it and to those who are its objects, is exceedingly useful. This, then, let us follow after, that having kept in the way of virtue, and with all diligence finished our course therein, we may be enabled to attain unto the good things eternal, through the grace and mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ: to Whom with the Father and the Holy Ghost together, be glory, might, honour, now and ever, world without end. Amen^s.

THE GOSPEL.

ST. LUKE xxiv. 36—48.

“Jesus Himself stood in the midst,” &c.

Jesus Himself stood in the midst of them, and saith unto them, Peace be unto you.

The Lord appeared to His disciples after His Resurrection, and saluted them, saying, *Peace be unto you.* This is peace indeed, and the salutation of salvation, for the very word salutation has received its name from salvation^t. And what can be better, than that Salvation Itself should salute man? For Christ is our Salvation. He is our Salvation, Who was wounded for us, and fixed by nails to the tree; and being taken down from the tree, was laid in the sepulchre, and from the

^s St. Chrysostom.

^t *salutatio*, from *salute*.

sepulchre arose with His wounds healed, His scars retained. For this He judged expedient for His disciples, that His scars should be retained, whereby the wounds of their hearts might be healed. What wounds? The wounds of unbelief. For He appeared to their eyes exhibiting real flesh, and they thought they saw a spirit. Beloved, if they had continued in this wound of unbelief, to think that the Body which had been buried could not rise again, but that a spirit in the image of a body deceived the eyes of men; if they had continued in this belief, yea, rather, in this unbelief, not their wounds, but their death would have to be bewailed.

But they were terrified and affrighted, and supposed that they had seen a spirit.

They did not believe that His Body could rise from the sepulchre. They thought Him to be a spirit, though they saw His flesh; they believed not their very eyes. Lo they believed not Christ Who shewed Himself to them. And what saith the Lord Jesus?

Why are ye troubled, and why do thoughts arise in your hearts? Behold My hands and My feet, where I was fixed with the nails; handle Me, and see; but ye see and yet do not see; handle Me, and see;— what? that a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see Me have. And when He had thus spoken, He shewed them His hands and His feet.

And while they yet believed not for joy, and wondered— now there was joy already, and yet hesitation continued. For a thing incredible had taken place, yet taken place it had. Is it at this day a thing incredible that the Body of the Lord rose again from the sepulchre? The whole cleansed world has believed it; whoso has not believed it has remained in his uncleanness. Yet at that time it was incredible, and persuasion was addressed not to the eyes only, but to the hands also, that by the bodily senses faith might descend into their hearts, and that faith, so descending into their

hearts, might be preached throughout the world to those who neither saw nor touched, and yet, without doubting, believed.

Have ye, saith He, any meat? And they gave Him a piece of a broiled fish, and of an honeycomb. And He took it, and did eat before them.

How much doeth the good Builder still, to build up the edifice of faith. He did not hunger, yet He asked to eat. And He eat by an act of His power, not through necessity. So, then, let the disciples acknowledge the verity of His Body, which the world has acknowledged at their preaching.

And He said unto them, These are the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you.

What is this, *while I was yet with you?* Was He not with them when He was speaking to them? What means, *while I was yet with you?* While I was with you as mortal, which now I am not. I was with you when I had yet to die, *with you* who were to die, Myself to die. Now I am no more with you, for I am with those who are to die, Myself to die no more for ever.

This, then, is what I said to you. What?

That all things must be fulfilled which are written in the law of Moses, and in the Prophets, and in the Psalms concerning Me.

I told you that all things must be fulfilled.

Then opened He their understanding, that they might understand the Scriptures.

Come, then, O Lord, employ Thy keys, open that we may understand. Lo Thou tellest all things, yet art not believed. Thou art thought to be a spirit, art touched, art rudely handled, and yet they who touch Thee hesitate. Thou dost admonish them out of the Scriptures, and yet they understand Thee not. Their hearts are closed, open and enter in. He did so. *Then opened He their understanding.* Open, O Lord; yes, open the heart of him who is in doubt concerning Christ!

And said unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day.

And this they saw. They saw Him suffering; they saw Him hanging; they saw Him with them alive after His Resurrection.

And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His Name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.

This the disciples did not yet see. They did not yet see the Church throughout all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. They saw the Head [Christ], and they believed the Head, touching the Body [the Church]. By that which they saw, they believed that which they saw not. We, too, are like unto them. We see something which they saw not, and something we do not see which they saw. What do we see which they saw not? The Church throughout all nations. What do we not see which they saw? Christ present in the flesh. As they saw Him [the Head] and believed concerning the Body, so do we see the Body; let us then believe concerning the Head. The sight of Christ helped them to believe the future Church; the sight of the Church helps us to believe that Christ has risen. Their faith was made complete, and ours is made complete also. Their faith was made complete by the sight of the Head, ours is made complete by the sight of the Body. Christ was made known to them *wholly*, and to us He is so made known; but He was not seen *wholly* by them, nor by us has He been *wholly* seen. By them the Head was seen, the Body believed; by us the Body has been seen, the Head believed. Yet to none is Christ lacking; in all He is complete, though to this day His Body remains imperfect. The Apostles believed; through them many of the inhabitants of Jerusalem believed; Judæa believed, Samaria believed. Let the members be added on, the building added on to the foundation. "For no other founda-

tion can any man lay," says the Apostle, "the which is laid, which is Christ Jesus". Let them rage madly, and be filled with jealousy; let S be stoned, let Saul,—one day to be the Apostle—keep the raiment of them who stone him; let S be killed, the Church of Jerusalem dispersed in confusion; out of it go forth burning brands, and kindle themselves, and spread their flame. For in the Church of Jerusalem, as it were burning brands were kindled by the Holy Spirit, when they had all one mind and one heart to Godward. When Stephen was in that pile suffered persecution; the brands were kindled, and the world was set on fire *.

* 1 Cor. iii. 11.

* St. Augustine, Ser. l.

FIRST SUNDAY AFTER EASTER.

THE EPISTLE.

1 ST. JOHN v. 4—12.

“Whatsoever is born of God,” &c.

There are three that bear record, the Spirit, and the water, and the blood: and these are one, [E. V., agree in one^a].

I would not have thee mistake that place in the Epistle of John the Apostle, where he saith, *There are three witnesses: the Spirit, and the water, and the blood: and the three are one.* Lest haply thou say that *the Spirit, and the water, and the blood,* are diverse substances, and yet it is said, *the three are one.* For this cause I have admonished thee, that thou mistake not

^a St. Augustine, in common with the other Fathers of the first four centuries, both Latin and Greek, appears to have been unacquainted with the clause of the three heavenly witnesses, which in our version intervenes in this passage: “There are three that bear record [in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one. And there are three that bear witness in earth,] the spirit, and the water, and the blood: and these three agree in one.” This circumstance, and the absence of these words from the early MSS., and from the best editions of ancient versions, have led commentators to the conclusion that they have been interpolated since the fourth century, and are not to be received as written by St. John. “Nor need any one be disturbed by their non-appearance in the text. It is certain that the ante-Nicene and Nicene Fathers confuted Arianism without the aid of this passage, to which they never refer, because it was not in their copies of this Epistle; and the doctrine of the Trinity has been clearly established by *other* Scriptures, and by the consentient voice and concurrent practice of the Church, especially in the administration of the Sacrament of Baptism, with which every child of God has been admitted into the Church of Christ by His express command, in the name of the ever-blessed Trinity, and also in her liturgical formularies, in the administration of the Holy Communion, and in the solemn Doxologies and Benedictions.”—See the Bp. of Lincoln’s Commentary on this passage.

the matter. For these are mystical expressions, in which the point always to be considered is, not what the actual things are, but what they denote as signs; since they are signs of things, and what they are in their essence is one thing, what they are in their signification another. If, then, we understand the things signified, we do find these things to be of one substance. Thus, if we should say, The rock and the water are one, meaning by the Rock, Christ, by the water the Holy Ghost, who doubts that rock and water are two different substances? Yet, because Christ and the Holy Spirit are of one and the same Nature, therefore, when one says, the Rock and the water are one, this can be rightly taken in this behalf, that these two things, of which the nature is diverse, are signs of other things of which the Nature is one. Three things, then, we know to have issued from the Body of the Lord when He hung upon the Tree: first, the spirit, of which it is written, "And He bowed the head, and gave up the spirit;" then, as His side was pierced by the spear, "blood and water^b." Which three things, if we look at as they are in themselves, they are in substance several and distinct, and therefore they are not one. But if we will enquire into the things signified by these, there not unreasonably comes into our thoughts the Trinity Itself, which is the One, Only True, Supreme God, Father and Son and Holy Ghost of Whom it could most truly be said, *There are Three Witnesses, and the Three are One*; so that by the term "Spirit," we should understand God the Father to be signified, as indeed it was concerning the worshipping of Him that the Lord was speaking, when He said, "God is a Spirit^c;" by the term "blood," the Son, because "the Word was made flesh^d;" and by the term "water," the Holy Ghost, as, when Jesus spake of the water which He would give to them that thirst, the

^b St. John xix. 30, 34.^c Ibid. iv. 24.^d Ibid. i. 14.

Evangelist saith, "But this said He of the Spirit, Which they that believed on Him were to receive ^c." Moreover, that the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost are "Witnesses," who that believes the Gospel can doubt, when the Son saith, "I am one that bear witness of Myself; and the Father that sent Me, He beareth witness of Me ^f." Where, though the Holy Ghost is not mentioned, yet He is not to be thought separated from Them. Howbeit, neither concerning the Spirit hath He kept silence elsewhere, and that He, too, is a Witness hath been sufficiently and openly shewn. For in promising Him, He said, "He shall bear witness of Me ^g." These are the *Three Witnesses, and Three are One*, because of one Substance. But whereas the signs by which They were signified came forth from the Body of the Lord, herein they figured the Church preaching the Trinity, that It hath one and the same Nature; since these Three in threefold manner signified are One, and the Church that preacheth Them is the Body of Christ. In this manner, then, the three things by which They are signified came out from the Body of the Lord: like as from the Body of the Lord sounded forth the command to baptize the nations "in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost ^h." "In the name," not, in the names; for these *Three are One*, and One God is these Three. And if in any other way this depth of mystery which we read in John's Epistle can be expounded and understood agreeably with the Catholic Faith, which neither confounds nor divides the Trinity, neither believes the substances diverse nor denies that the Persons are Three, it is on no account to be rejected. For whenever in Holy Scripture, in order to exercise the minds of the faithful, any thing is put darkly, it is to be joyfully welcomed, if it can be in many ways but not unwisely expounded ⁱ.

^c St. John vii. 39.

^f Ibid. viii. 18.

^g Ibid. xv. 26.

^h St. Matt. xxviii. 19.

ⁱ St. Augustine.

THE GOSPEL.

ST. JOHN XL. 19—23.

"The same day at evening," &c.

The same day at evening, being the first day of the week, when the doors were shut, where the disciples were assembled for fear of the Jews, came Jesus and stood in the midst, and saith unto them, Peace be unto you. And when He had so said, He shewed them His hands and His side.

He appeared in the evening, because it was probable that they would then be especially fearful. But the marvel was that they did not suppose Him to be an apparition, although He entered *when the doors were shut*, and suddenly. The chief cause of this was that Mary had beforehand wrought great faith in them, and besides, He shewed them His countenance clear and mild. And He soothed their troubled thoughts by saying, *Peace be unto you.*

That is, Be not troubled; at the same time reminding them of the word which He spake to them before the Crucifixion, "My Peace I give unto you¹;" and again, "In Me ye have peace," but, "in the world ye shall have tribulation¹."

Then were the disciples glad when they saw the Lord. Seest thou the words issuing in deeds? For what He said before the Crucifixion, that "I will see you again, and your heart shall rejoice, and your joy no man taketh from you²," this He now accomplished in deed. All these things led them to a most exact faith. For since they had a truceless war with the Jews, He repeated continually the *Peace be unto you*, giving them the consolation to counterbalance the war. This, therefore, was the first word which He spake to them since His Resurrection. To women He giveth good tidings of joy³, because that sex was in sorrow, and had re-

¹ St. John xiv. 27.¹ Ibid. xvi. 33.² Ibid. xvi. 22.³ St. Matt. xxviii. 9: "Jesus met them (the women), saying, Rejoice." *Χαίrete*; E. V., "All hail."

this in the first curse. Thus, He giveth good
 & suitable to all,—to men peace, because of the
 they had to wage; to women joy, because of their
 : Having, then, put away all painful things,
 leth them of the success of the Cross, and this
 ace °.

n said Jesus to them again, *Peace be unto you.*
 eration is confirmation: it is in fact He that
 that “peace upon peace^p,” promised by the
 et.

*My Father hath sent Me, even so send I you. And
 He had said this, He breathed on them, and saith
 them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost.*

breathing on them He signified that the Holy
 is not the Father’s only, but His^q.

longer an appeal is made to the Father, but with
 ity He giveth them the power, for *He breathed
 n, and saith, Receive ye the Holy Ghost. Whose-
 sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and
 ever sins ye retain, they are retained.*

a king, sending forth governors, gives power to
 to prison and to deliver from it, so in sending
 forth, Christ invests them with the same power.
 ow saith He, “If I go not away the Comforter
 not come^r,” and yet giveth them the Spirit?
 say He gave not the Spirit, but rendered them fit
 eive It by breathing on them. For if Daniel,
 he saw an angel, was afraid, what would not they
 suffered when they received that unspeakable
 nless He had first made them learners? Where-
 e said not, “Ye have received the Holy Ghost,”
Receive ye the Holy Ghost. Yet one will not be
 in asserting that they then also received some
 al power and grace; not so as to raise the dead,
 work miracles, but so as to remit sins. For the
 of the Spirit are of different kinds; wherefore

St. Chrysostom.

° St. Augustine.

^p Isa. xxvi. 3, margin.

^r St. John xvi. 7.

He adds, *Whosoever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them*, shewing what kind of power He was then giving. But after His going away, they received also the power of working miracles. As He saith, "Ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto Me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judæa." And witnesses they became by means of miracles, for unspeakable is the grace of the Spirit, and multiform the gift. But this comes to pass that thou mayest learn that the gift and the power of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, is One. For things which appear to be peculiar to the Father, these are seen also to belong to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost. "How, then," saith some one, "doth none come to the Son 'except the Father draw him'?" Why this very thing is shewn to belong to the Son also. "I," He saith, "am the Way: no man cometh unto the Father, but by Me." And observe that it belongeth to the Spirit also; for, "No man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost." Again, we see that the Apostles were given to the Church at one time by the Father, at another by the Son, at another by the Holy Ghost; and that the diversities of gifts belong to the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost.

Let us, then, do all we can to keep the Holy Spirit with ourselves, and let us treat with much honour those into whose hands Its operations have been committed. For great is the dignity of the priests: *Whosoever sins, it saith, ye remit, they are remitted unto them*. Wherefore, also, Paul saith, "Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves," and hold them very exceedingly in honour. For thou, indeed, carest about thine own affairs, and if thou orderest them well thou givest no account for others; but the priest, even if he rightly order his own life,

* Acts i. 8.

* St. John vi. 44.

* Ibid. xiv. 6.

† 1 Cor. xii. 8, 4.

† Heb. xiii. 17.

if he have not an anxious care for thine also, yea, and for that of all those around him, will depart with the wicked into hell; and often, when not betrayed by his own conduct, he perishes by yours if he have not rightly performed all his part. Knowing, therefore, the greatness of the danger, give them a large share of your goodwill; which Paul also implied, when he said, "For they watch for your souls," and not simply so, but, "as they that shall give account." They ought, therefore, to receive great attention from you. But if you join with the rest in trampling upon them, then shall not your affairs be in good condition. While the steersman continues in good heart, the crew will be in safety; but if he be tired out by their reviling him, and shewing ill-will against him, he cannot watch equally well, or retain his skill, and, without intending it, throws them into ten thousand mischiefs. So, too, the priest, if he enjoy honour from you, will be able to order well your affairs; but if ye throw him into despondency, ye weaken his hands, and, although he be very courageous, render him, as well as yourselves, an easy prey to the waves. Consider what Christ saith concerning the Jews: "The Scribes and Pharisees sit in Moses' seat: all therefore whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do²." Now we have not to say, "the priests sit in Moses' seat," but, "in that of Christ;" for they have successively received His doctrine. Wherefore also Paul saith, "We are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us³." See ye not that, in the case of Gentile rulers, all bow to them, and oftentimes even persons superior in family, in life, in intelligence, submit to those who judge them? And because of Him who hath appointed them, they consider none of these differences, but respect the decision of their governor, whosoever he be that receives the rule over them.

² St. Matt. xxiii. 2, 3.

³ 2 Cor. v. 20.

Is there, then, such fear when man appoints, but when God appointeth do we despise him who is appointed, and abuse him, and besmirch him with reproaches, and though forbidden to judge our brethren, do we sharpen our tongues against our priests? Knowest thou not that by so judging thou makest thine own judgment the harder? And this I say, not as approving of those who exercise their priesthood unworthily, but as greatly pitying and weeping for them; yet do I not on this account allow that it is right that they should be judged by those over whom they are set. And although their life be very much spoken against, thou, if thou take heed to thyself, will not be harmed at all in respect of the things committed to them by God. For if He caused a voice to be uttered by an ass, and bestowed spiritual blessings by a diviner, working by the foolish mouth and impure tongue of Balaam, in behalf of the offending Jews, much more for the sake of you, the right-minded, will He, though the priests be vile exceedingly, work all the things that are His, and will send the Holy Ghost. For not by his purity doth the pure draw down that Spirit, but it is Grace that worketh all. The things which are placed in the hands of the priest it is with God alone to give; and however far human wisdom may reach, it will appear inferior to that grace. And this I say, not that we may order our own life carelessly, but that when some of those set over you are careless livers, you, the ruled, may not heap up evil for yourselves.

But why speak I of priests? Neither Angel nor Archangel can do anything with regard to what is given from God; but the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, dispenseth all, while the priest lends his tongue and his hand. For it would not be just that through the wickedness of another, those who come in faith to the symbol of their salvation should be harmed. Knowing these things, let us fear God, and hold His priests in honour, paying them all reverence;

that both for our own good deeds, and the attention shewn to them, we may receive a great return from God, through the grace and loving-kindness of our Lord Jesus Christ, with Whom, to the Father and the Holy Ghost, be glory, dominion, and honour, now and ever, and world without end. Amen ^b.

^b St. Chrysostom.

SECOND SUNDAY AFTER EASTER.

THE EPISTLE.

1 ST. PETER ii. 19—25.

“ This is thankworthy,” &c.

This is thankworthy, if a man for conscience toward God endure grief, suffering wrongfully. For what glory is it, if, when ye be buffeted for your faults, ye take it patiently? but if, when ye do well, and suffer for it, ye take it patiently, this is acceptable with God.

No great thing is it to say, “I have borne reproach;” but it is, to say, “for Thy sake have I borne it ^a.” For if thou sufferest because thou hast sinned, for thine own sake thou sufferest, not for the sake of God. For what glory is there to you, saith Peter, if sinning ye are punished, and ye bear it? but if thou sufferest because thou hast kept the commandments of God, truly for the sake of God thou sufferest, and thy reward remaineth for ever, because for the sake of God thou hast suffered reviling ^b.

For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow His steps: Who did no sin, neither was guile found in His mouth: Who, when He was reviled, reviled not again; when He suffered, He threatened not; but committed Himself to Him that judgeth righteously.

Oh, my brethren, how shall we admire the loving-kindness of our Saviour? With what power, and what kind of trumpet should a man cry out, when exalting such helps as these which He gives? That not only

^a Ps. lxix. 7.

^b St. Aug. on Ps. lxix. 7.

should we bear His image, but should also receive from Him an example as a pattern of heavenly conversation ; that we should go on as He hath begun ; that suffering, we should not threaten ; being reviled, we should not revile again ; but should bless them that curse, and in everything commit ourselves to God who judgeth righteously ^c.

Who His own self bare our sins in His own Body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness : by Whose stripes ye were healed. For ye were as sheep going astray ; but are now returned unto the Shepherd and Bishop of your souls.

To the curse upon "every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the Law ^d," all the people were subject, for no man had continued in, or was a keeper of, the whole Law ; but Christ exchanged this curse for the other, "Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree." As, then, both he who hangeth on a tree, and he who transgresses the Law, is cursed ; and as he who is about to relieve from a curse ought himself to be free from it, and to receive another instead of it, therefore Christ took upon Him such another, and thereby relieved us from the former curse. It was like an innocent man's undertaking to die for another sentenced to death, and so rescuing him from punishment. For Christ took not upon Him the curse of transgression, but the other curse, in order to remove that of others ; for, *He did no sin, neither was guile found in His mouth.* And as by dying He rescued from death those who were dying, so by taking upon Himself the curse, He delivered them from it ^e.

To us it is no human affectation of cynical indifference, schooled by a stupid apathy, which giveth authority for the exercise of patience, but the divine order-

^c St. Athanasius, Fest. Ep. II.

^d Gal. iii. 10.

^e St. Chrysostom on Gal. iii. 13.

ing of a lively and heavenly rule, setting forth God Himself as the example of patience, first as the Being Who scattereth the dew of this light over "the just and the unjust" equally, Who suffereth the offices of the seasons, the services of the elements, the tributes of the whole creation, to come alike to the worthy and the unworthy; bearing with those most unthankful nations, who worship the follies of their own craft, and the works of their own hands, and persecute His Name, His household; bearing with covetousness, with iniquity, with wantonness, with the maliciousness which daily waxeth insolent, so that by His own patience He robbeth Himself; seeing that the greater part believe not in the Lord for this reason, because that for so long a time they have not known that He is wroth with the world.

This instance, indeed, of divine patience, being as it were afar off, may perchance be reckoned among those things which be too high for us. But what shall we say of that which hath in a manner been "handled" among men openly in the world? God suffereth Himself to be conceived in the womb of a mother, and abideth the time, and being born waiteth to grow up, and being grown up is not eager to be acknowledged, but putteth a further slight upon Himself, and is baptized by His own servant, and repelleth the attacks of the tempter by words only. When from the Lord He became the Master, teaching man to escape death, having well learned, for salvation's sake, the forgiving spirit of offended patience, He strove not, He cried not, neither did any hear His voice in the streets; the shattered "reed He did not break, the smoking flax He did not quench."^a For there was no lying voice in the Prophet, yea, rather in the testimony of God Himself, Who put His own spirit in His Son with perfection of patience. None that desired to cleave unto Him did He not receive; no man's table or house did He despise; yea, Himself ministered to the washing of His

^a St. Matt. v. 45.^b 1 St. John i. 1.^c Isa. xlii. 2, 3.

disciples' feet. He scorned not the sinners nor the publicans; He was not angry with that city which would not receive Him, when even His disciples desired that fires from heaven should presently destroy itⁱ. He healed the unthankful; He gave place to those who laid snares for Him. This were but little, if He had not had in His own company even His own betrayer, and yet did not determinately make him known. But when He is delivered up, when "He is brought as a lamb to the slaughter," for "so He openeth not His mouth^k" more than "the sheep" when in the power of "her shearers;" He, at whose side, if He had desired it, "legions of angels^l" from heaven would at one word have been present, approved not the avenging sword of even a single disciple. In Malchus the patience of the Lord was wounded; wherefore also He cursed the works of the sword for ever after, and by the restoration of soundness to him whom He had not Himself wounded, He made satisfaction through Patience, the mother of Mercy. I pass in silence the Crucifixion, for it was for that that He had come into the world; yet was there need of insults also that He might undergo death! But being about to depart, He desired to be filled to the full with the pleasure of patience. He is spit upon, is beaten, is mocked, is foully clothed, and still more foully crowned. Wondrous constancy in patience. He Who had purposed to hide Himself in the form of man, followed none of the example of man's impatience! In this especially ought ye, O Pharisees, to have acknowledged the Lord; none among men could have worked patience such as this! Such and so great proofs,—whose greatness is with the nations indeed a diminishing, but with us is the cause and building up of Faith,—manifest clearly enough to those to whom it is given to believe, not only by the discourses

ⁱ St. Luke ix. 54.^k Isa. liii. 7.^l St. Matt. xxvi. 53.

of the Lord in teaching, but by His sufferings in enduring, that patience is the nature of God, the effect and excellency of an innate property.

It is the patience of the shepherd which seeketh and findeth the sheep which was gone astray; for Impatience might easily despise "one sheep." But through patience he undertaketh the labour of the search, yea, and moreover carrieth on his shoulders the deserted offender, a patient bearer of his burden^a.

THE GOSPEL.

ST. JOHN X. 11—16.

"Jesus said, I am the good Shepherd," &c.

Jesus said, I am the good Shepherd: the good Shepherd giveth His life for the sheep. But he that is an hireling, and not the Shepherd, whose own the sheep are not, seeth the wolf coming, and leaveth the sheep, and fleeth: and the wolf catcheth them, and scattereth the sheep.

Let us, I beseech you, remain pasturing beneath this Shepherd. We so remain if we obey Him, if we hear His voice, if we follow not a stranger. And what is His voice? "Blessed are the poor in spirit;" "blessed are the pure in heart;" "blessed are the merciful^a." If thus we do, we remain beneath the Shepherd, and the wolf will not be able to come in; or if he come against us, he will do so to his own hurt. For we have a Shepherd Who so loveth us that He gave even His life for us. When, therefore, He is both full of power and full of love towards us, what is there to hinder us from being saved? Nothing, unless we ourselves revolt from Him^b?

He that is an hireling. It is no good character that

^a Tertullian.

^b St. Matt. v. 8, 7, 8.

^c St. Chrysostom.

the hireling bears here, yet even he is in some respects useful, and would not be called an hireling did he not receive hire from an employer. Who, then, is this hireling, at once culpable and needful? There are in the Church certain overseers, of whom St. Paul saith, "Seek thine own, not the things of Jesus Christ^p." What meaneth seeking thine own? Not loving Christ freely, not seeking God for His own sake; men pursuing temporal advantages, men open-mouthed for gain, seeking honours of men. When these things are loved by one who is set over others, and when for these things' sake one serves God; whoso does such is an hireling. Of such saith the Lord, "Verily I say unto you, they have received their reward." Hear, concerning holy Timothy, what the Apostle Paul saith: "I trust in the Lord Jesus to send Timotheus shortly unto you, that I also may be of good comfort, when I know your state. For I have no man like-minded, who will naturally care for your state. For all seek their own, not the things which are Jesus Christ's^q."

In the midst of hirelings the shepherd groaned; he sought some one who would sincerely love the flock of Christ; and about him, among those who at that time were with him, he found none^r.

If the hireling observe any one indulging in wicked talking, or in sentiments to the deadly hurt of his soul, or doing aught that is abominable or unclean, and notwithstanding that he seems to bear a character of some importance in the Church, (from which if he hopes for advantage he is an hireling,) says nothing; and when he sees the man perishing in his sin, sees the wolf following him, sees his throat dragged by his teeth to punishment, says not to him, "Thou sinnest;" does not chide him, lest he lose his own advantage,—this, I say, is to flee when he seeth the wolf; he does

^p Phil. ii. 21.^q Ibid. ver. 19—21.^r St. Augustine.

not say to him, "Thou art doing wickedly." This is no flight of the body, but of the soul. He whom thou seest standing still in body, flees in heart when he sees a sinner, and does not say to him, "Thou sinnest," yea, when he is even in concert with him*.

But hear that hirelings are also necessary. Many in the Church, pursuing earthly advantages, yet do preach Christ, and through them the voice of Christ is heard; and the sheep follow, not the hireling, but the voice of the Shepherd through the hireling. Hear the hireling pointed out by the Lord Himself: "The Scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses' seat: what they say, do ye; but what they do, do not ye!" What else hath He here said, but, "Through hirelings hear ye the voice of the Shepherd." For, as sitting in the chair of Moses, they teach God's law: therefore by them doth God teach. But if those men want to teach their own, hear it not, do it not. For though it be true that such do seek their own, not the things which are Jesus Christ's, yet no hireling ever dared say to the people of Christ, "Seek thine own, not the things which are Jesus Christ's." The evil which the hireling does, he does not preach from the chair of Christ; he hurts by the evil that he does, not by the good he speaks. Pluck the grape, beware the thorn. And how say I, "pluck the grape, beware the thorn," when the Lord saith, "Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles?" This is true; yet is that true also which I saw, "pluck the grape, beware the thorn?" For now and then a bunch of grapes, springing from the root of the vine, hangs upon a hedge, the vine-branch grows, becomes entwined among the thorns, and the thorn bears fruit not its own. It was not that the vine produced the thorn, but that the fruit-bearing branch overhung the thorns. Ask thou only what be the roots, seek the root of the thorn; thou findest

* St. Augustine, Ser. lxxxvii.

* St. Matt. xxiii. 2.

* St. Matt. vii. 16.

it outside, away from the vine. Seek the origin of the grape; the vine bore this from its root. So, then, the chair of Moses was the vine; the manners of the Pharisees, the thorns. True doctrine by bad men, the vine-branch on the hedge, the cluster among thorns. Gather it cautiously, lest while thou seekest fruit thou tear thine hand: and when thou hearest the good words he says, do not imitate the evil things he does. "What they say, do ye; but what they do, do not ye." Even through hirelings hear ye the voice of the Shepherd; but be ye not hirelings, seeing ye are members of the Shepherd.

Now it is said of the hireling, that *when he seeth the wolf coming, he fleeth, because the sheep are not his own, and he careth not for the sheep.* The wolf is the devil. Who, then, is the hireling, who seeth the wolf coming and fleeth? The man who seeks his own, not the things which are Jesus Christ's, that man doth not frankly reprove him that sinneth. Lo, some man hath sinned, hath grievously sinned; he must be rebuked, be excommunicated;—yea, but excommunicated, he will be an enemy, will plot, will do mischief when he can. Now the man who seeks his own, not the things that are Jesus Christ's, this man, that he may not lose that which he follows after, to wit, the advantage of men's friendship, and incur the annoyance of men's enmity, holds his peace, does not rebuke. Lo, the wolf is griping the sheep by the throat: the devil hath seduced a believer into adultery; thou holdest thy peace, rebukest not. O, hireling, thou sawest the wolf coming, and didst flee! Perchance he answers, and says, "Lo, here I am; I have not fled." Thou hast fled, because thou hast held thy peace; thou didst hold thy peace, because thou wast afraid. Fear is the flight of the mind. In body thou didst stand, in spirit thou didst flee; which thing did not he who said, "Though I be absent in the flesh, yet am I with you in the

spirit¹." He could not be said to have fled in spirit, who, even being absent in the body, rebuked fornicators by his Epistle².

I am the good Shepherd, and know My sheep, and am known of Mine. This Paul declared when he said, "God hath not cast away His people whom He foreknew³;" and Moses, "The Lord knows those that are His⁴."

Then, that thou mayest not attribute to the Shepherd and the sheep the same measure of knowledge, or deem that He knoweth as man knoweth, He adds,

As the Father knoweth Me, even so I know the Father. In this case, then, the knowledge is equal, but in the former it was not equal⁵.

And I lay down My life for the sheep.

As if to say, This is why I know My Father, and am known by the Father, because *I lay down My life for My sheep*, i.e. by My love for My sheep, I shew how much I love My Father.

But, as He came to redeem not only the Jews, but also the Gentiles, He adds⁶,

And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold.

The sheep hitherto spoken of are those of the stock of Israel according to the flesh; but there were others of the stock of Israel according to faith, Gentiles, who were as yet out of the fold; predestinated, but not yet gathered together. *They are not of this fold*, because they are not of the race of Israel, but they will be of this fold⁷.

Them also must I bring.

The word *must*, here used, doth not express necessity, but is declaratory of something which will certainly come to pass⁸.

And there shall be one fold, and one Shepherd.

¹ Coloss. ii. 5.

² Numb. xvi. 5.

³ St. Augustine, Cat.

⁴ St. Augustine.

⁵ St. Chrysostom.

⁶ St. Chrysostom.

⁷ Rom. xi. 2.

⁸ St. Gregory, Cat.

If ye pay attention to the Scriptures, ye will find the two Churches, which are not two but one, figured out in many places. There were two ships out of which He called His disciples; they figured these two people, when they had let down their nets, and took up so great a draught, and so large a number of fishes, that the nets were almost broken. "And they filled," it is said, "both the ships^f." The two ships figured the one Church, but made out of two peoples, joined together in Christ, though coming from different parts. Of this too, the two wives who had one husband, Leah and Rachel, are a figure. Of these two, the two blind men also are a figure, who sat by the wayside, to whom the Lord gave sight. To this end the Cornerstone serveth, for to make of two one. To this end serveth That Shepherd, for to make of two flocks One^g.

^f St. Luke v. 7.

^g St. Augustine, Ser. lxxxviii.

THIRD SUNDAY AFTER EASTER.

THE EPISTLE.

1 St. Peter ii. 11—17.

“Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims,” &c.

Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul.

All men that mind earthly things, all men that choose earthly felicity rather than God, all men that seek their own things, not the things which are of Jesus Christ, belong to that city which is mystically called Babylon, and which hath the devil for king. But all men who mind those things which are above; who meditate on heavenly things; who live in the world with watchfulness, that they may not offend God; who are careful not to sin; who, if sinning, are not ashamed to confess; who are humble, mild, holy, just, godly, and good; all these belong to that city which hath Christ for King*.

Give heed, brethren, I entreat you; for dear is the one country, and truly but one country, the only country: besides her whatsoever we have is but a sojourning in a strange land^b.

Of a truth the luxurious are worthy of tears, who make fat that which is thrown about them, I mean the body, and take no thought of that soul which must give account. See how great an evil luxury is; to some their wealth, to others their belly is their God. And who are these? They who mind earthly things; who say, “Let us build.” Where? on the earth.

* St. Aug., Ps. lxi.

^b Ibid.

“Let us purchase farms.” Where? on the earth. “Let us obtain power;” again on the earth. “Let us gain glory;” again on the earth. “Let us enrich ourselves;” all these things are on the earth. Not such as these was Paul; wherefore he said, “Our conversation is in heaven.” Let us not, then, seek for ease here, let us wish to shine there, where our conversation is ^c.

Having your conversation honest among the Gentiles : that, whereas they speak against you as evil doers, they may by your good works, which they shall behold, glorify God in the day of visitation.

Let us look to one object only, how to order our own life with strictness. For thus shall we guide to life such as are now sitting in darkness. For such is the virtue of that light, as not only to shine here, but also to conduct its followers thither. For when men see us despising all things present, and preparing ourselves for that which is to come, our actions will persuade them sooner than any discourse. But if we entangle ourselves in things present, and plunge ourselves in them more and more, how will it be possible for them to be persuaded that we are hastening to another home ^d?

Christ saith, “Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.”

So do the heavens also glorify Him, uttering no voice, but by the view of them attracting wonder, and referring the glory to the Great Artificer. So let us glorify Him also, or rather, more than they. For we can if we will. For not so much do the heavens, nor the day, nor night, glorify God as a holy soul. For as one that gazeth upon the beauty of the heaven, saith, “Glory be to Thee, O God! How fair a work hast Thou formed!” so, too, when beholding virtue in

^c St. Chrys. on Phil. iii.

^d St. Chrys. on St. Matt. vi.

any man, nay, and much more so in the latter instance. For from those works of creation all do not glorify God ; but many even assert that the things that exist are self-moving, and others impute to demons the workmanship of the world, and providence ; and these, indeed, greatly and unpardonably err ; but in regard to the virtue of man, no one shall have power to hold these shameless opinions, but shall assuredly glorify God, when he seeth him that serveth Him living in goodness. For who can help being astonished, when one being a man, and partaking of our common nature, and living among other men, is seen like adamant to resist the assaults of passion ? when being in the midst of fire, and sword, and of wild beasts, he is even harder than adamant, and vanquishes all for the Word of 'Godliness' sake ? when being injured, he blesses ; when being evil reported of, he praises ; when being despitefully used, he prays for those who injure him ; when being plotted against, he does good to those who lay snares for him ? For these things, and such as these, will glorify God far more than the heavens. For the Greeks, when they behold the heavens, feel no awe ; but when they see a holy man exhibiting a severe course of life, they shrink away and condemn themselves. Since, when he that partakes of the same nature with themselves, is raised above them, more than the heaven is above the earth, even against their inclinations they perceive that it is a divine power which works these things^e.

Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake : whether it be to the king, as supreme ; or unto governors, as unto them that are sent by Him for the punishment of evil doers, and for the praise of them that do well.

[See St. Chrysostom on the parallel passages in the Epistle for the Fourth Sunday after Epiphany : " Let every soul be subject unto the

• St. Chrysostom on 1 Cor.

higher powers ; for there is no power but of God : the powers that be are ordained of God. . . . For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil.”]

For so is the will of God, that with well doing ye may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men : as free, and not using your liberty for a cloke of maliciousness, but as the servants of God.

We have received power to be free, whereby man is more thoroughly tried whether he reverences, and fears, and loves the Lord. And therefore Peter saith, that we have not *liberty as a cloke of maliciousness*, but to try and manifest faith ^f.

Not as hired servants, but as sons and freemen, let us do all things for the love of our Father, and let us at last cease from adhering to the world, that we may put the Greek also to shame. For even now, desiring to put out my strength against them, I shrink from so doing, lest haply, surpass them as we may by our arguments and the truth of what we teach, we yet bring upon ourselves much derision by the comparison of our way of life with theirs ; seeing that they, while cleaving unto error, abide by a strict rule of life, and we do just the contrary. However, I will say it. For there may, there may be a chance, that in practising how to contend against them, we shall long, as rivals, to become better than they in our mode of life also ^g.

Honour all men.

Oh how full of true wisdom, how universal a gathering - word of our salvation is the lesson which Paul puts forth in the words, “in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than himself.” If, he means, thou feelest another to be greater than thyself ; if thou art fully persuaded of it, then thou assignest him the honour, and if thou thyself assignest him the honour, thou wilt not be displeased at seeing him honoured by another. Do not, then, think him simply greater

^f St. Irenæus.

^g St. Chrysostom on 1 Cor.

fully persuaded . . .
into anger when ill-treated
for no one would envy tho
himself, for all things are
excellence.

And when he, too, who
thee, is thus affected towa
double wall against offence
esteemed him thus worthy o
eth thee likewise, no painfu
for if this conduct when al
destroy all strife, who shall
when it is shewn by both
self. The defence is threesf
fold, for humility is the ca

How long shall we be i
as we laugh when we s
selves up, and looking ha
picking up stones and t
the haughtiness of men, t
tellect and an unformed
ashes proud? Art thou
why? Tell me, what is

nothing so foreign to a Christian soul as haughtiness. Haughtiness, I say, not boldness, nor courage, for these are congenial. But as haughtiness is one thing, and boldness and courage another; so, too, humility is one thing, and meanness, flattery, and adulation another¹.

Honour all men. Love the brotherhood.

Let us bear it in mind that charity is the cognizance of the disciples of Christ; that without this all else avails nothing; that it is easy to us if we will. "Yes," say you, "we know all this, but how are we to go to work that it may be achieved?" First, let us put away the things which are subversive of charity, and then we shall establish it. Let none be resentful, none envious, none rejoicing in the misfortunes of others. These are the things that hinder love; well, then, the things that make it are of the opposite kind. For it is not enough to put away the things that hinder, the things that establish must also be forthcoming. For a beginning, let none have an enemy; this, in itself, is not a small matter; let none envy; it is not possible to accuse the man who envies not. How, then, shall we be warmly affected? What makes love of persons? Beauty of person. Then let us also make our souls beautiful, and we shall be amiable one to another; for it is necessary, of course, not only to love, but also to be loved. Let us get a well-spoken mouth and pure manners.

We have one world that we all inhabit, with the same fruits we all are fed. But these are small matters. By the same Sacraments we partake of the same spiritual food. These, surely, are just causes for loving. Mark how many inducements and pleas for friendship they that are without have found: community of art or trade, neighbourhood, relationships; but mightier than all these are the impulses and ties which are among us: this Table is calculated more

¹ St. Chrys., Phil. ii. 3.

than all else to shame us into friendliness. But many of us who come thereto do not even know one another. The reason, it may be said, is that there are so many. By no means; it is only our own sluggish indifference. Once there were three thousand—there were five thousand—and yet they had all one soul; but now each knows not his brother, and is not ashamed to lay the blame on the number, because it is so great! Yet he that hath many friends is invincible; stronger he than any tyrant. Not such the safety the tyrant has with his body-guards, as this man has with his friends. Moreover, this man is the more glorious of the two; for the tyrant is guarded by his own slaves, but this man by his peers; the tyrant by men afraid and unwilling, this man by willing men and fearless. And here, too, is a wonderful thing to be seen—many in one, and one in many. Just as in an harp, the sounds are diverse, not the harmony, and they all together give out one harmony and symphony. I could wish to bring you, were it possible, into a city wherein all should be one soul; then shouldest thou see, surpassing all harmony of harp and flute, the more harmonious symphony. But the musician is the Might of Love. It is this that strikes out the sweet melody, singing withal a strain in which no note is out of tune. This strain rejoices both Angels and God the Lord of Angels; this strain rouses the whole heavenly audience; this even lulls the wrath of demons. This strain not only soothes evil passions,—it does not even suffer them to rise, but deep is the stillness. For as in a theatre, when the hand of the musician plays, all listen with a hush, and there is no noise there; so among friends, when Love strikes the chords, all the passions are still and laid to sleep, like wild beasts charmed and unnerved; just as where hate is, there all is contrary. Though thou let fall some casual hasty word, there is none to catch thee up, but all forgive thee; though thou do some hasty thing, none puts upon

it the worst construction, but all allowance is made; every one is prompt to stretch out the hand to him that is falling, every one wishing him to stand. A wall it is indeed impregnable, this friendship; a wall, which not the devil himself, much less men, can overthrow. It is not possible for that man to fall into danger who has gotten many friends. Where love is, no room is there for anger, but only for pleasant feelings; no room is there for envying; none for resentment. Lo! I testify and declare to you, that if but ten of you would knit yourselves together, and make this your work, as the Apostles made the preaching theirs, and the prophets theirs the teaching, so we the making friends, great would be the reward. Let us make for ourselves royal portraits. For if this be the cognizance of disciples, we do a greater work than if we should attain power to raise the dead. The diadem and the purple mark the emperor, and where these are not, though his apparel be all gold, the emperor is not yet manifest. So it is with the cognizance of love. Let us be affable; let us not wait for our neighbours to move. Say not, "If I see any person hanging back for me to make the first advance, I become worse than he is;" but rather when thou seest this, forestall him, and put an end to his bad feeling. Seest thou one diseased, and addest thou to his malady? This, most of all, let us make sure of, "In honour to prefer one another, to account others better than oneself^k;" deem not this to be lessening thyself. If thou prefer another in honour, thou hast honoured thyself, attracting more honour to thyself. On all occasions, let us yield the precedence to others. Let us bear nothing in mind of the evil done us, but if any good has been done, let us remember that only. Nothing so makes a man a friend as a gracious tongue, a mouth speaking good things, a soul free from self-elation, a contempt of vain-glory, a despising

^k Rom. xii. 19.

of honours. If we secure these things, we shall become invincible to the snares of the devil, and having with strictness accomplished the pursuit of virtue, shall attain unto the good things promised to them that love God¹.

Fear God.

Let us keep the fear of God before our eyes. For nothing, surely nothing, so ruins a man as to slip from this anchor, as nothing so saves him as continually looking thereto. For if, having a man before our eyes, we feel we are restrained from committing sin, and often, abashed even at the presence of servants, we keep from doing anything amiss, consider what safety we shall enjoy by having God ever before our eyes! In this case the devil will not attack us, for he would be labouring in vain².

Honour the king.

We, in the emperors, reverence the judgment of God, who hath set them over the nations³.

As strangers and pilgrims we ought to consider, dearest brethren, we ought, indeed, to retain in our meditations, that we have renounced the world, and are continuing here, for this mean season, as strangers and pilgrims. Let us embrace the day which makes over each of us to his own resting-place; which, after rescuing us hence, and ridding us of the chains of earth, place us in Paradise, and in the Heavenly Kingdom. What man that is journeying abroad, doth not hasten back toward his native land? Who that is speeding a voyage toward them he loves, longs not with more ardour for a prosperous wind, that so he

¹ St. Chrysostom on Acts.

² St. Chrysostom on Romans.

³ Tertullian.

may embrace his friends the sooner? Paradise we are to reckon for our native land; Patriarchs are now our parents; wherefore not haste and run, to behold our country, to salute our parents? It is a large and loving company who expect us there,—parents, brothers, children, a manifold and numerous assemblage longing after us, who, having security of their own immortality, still feel anxiety for our salvation. What a common gladness both to them and us, when we pass into their presence and their embrace! And, O sweet Heavenly Realms, where death can never terrify, and life can never end! Ah, perfect and perpetual Bliss! There is the glorious company of the Apostles; there is the assembly of Prophets exulting; there is the innumerable multitude of Martyrs, crowned after their victory of strife and passion; there are Virgins triumphant, who have overcome by vigour of continency the concupiscence of the flesh and body; there are merciful men, obtaining mercy, who fulfilled the works of righteousness by dealing food and bounty to the poor, and, in obedience to the instructions of the Lord, translated the inheritance of earth into the treasures of Heaven. To these, dearest brethren, let us with eager longings hasten; let it be the portion which we desire, speedily to be among them, speedily to be gone to Christ. God behold this thought of ours! This purpose of our mind and faith may the Lord Jesus Christ witness! Who will make recompenses of His glory the larger according as man's longings after Him have been the stronger °.

° St. Cyprian, Treatise ix.

THE GOSPEL.

ST. JOHN xvi. 16—22.

"Jesus said to His Disciples, A little while and ye," &c.

Jesus said to His Disciples, A little while, and ye shall not see Me; and again, a little while and ye shall see Me; because I go to the Father . . . They said therefore, What is this that He saith, A little while? we cannot tell what He saith.

These words of our Lord were so obscure to the Disciples, before they were fulfilled, that they confessed that they did not at all understand them. When, previously, He had said, "I go unto the Father, and ye shall see Me no more," He seemed to speak to them openly, and they made no question among themselves; but they were staggered by the difficulty when He said, *A little while, and ye shall not see Me; and again, a little while and ye shall see Me.*

Now, what was so obscure to them at that time, and was presently made manifest, is of course manifest to us now; for after a little while He rose again, and they saw Him. And what was meant in that other place by the saying, "ye shall see Me no more," was that they should see Christ mortal no more^{*}.

Now Jesus knew that they were desirous to ask Him, and said unto them, Do ye enquire among yourselves of that I said, A little while and ye shall not see Me; and again, a little while and ye shall see Me? Verily, verily I say unto you, That ye shall weep and lament, but the world shall rejoice: and ye shall be sorrowful, but your sorrow shall be turned into joy.

This may be taken to mean, that at the very time when by the Lord's death His Disciples were made sor-

^{*} See St. Augustine on this passage in the Gospel for the Fourth Sunday after Easter.

rowful, the world, by which are signified the enemies who put Him to death, were made glad; and that anon the Disciples should be made glad by His Resurrection⁹.

Having shewn that after grief comes joy, and that grief gendereth joy, and that the grief is short, but the joy endless, He passeth to a common example; and what saith He?

A woman, when she is in travail, hath sorrow, because her hour is come: but as soon as she is delivered of the child, she remembereth no more the anguish, for joy that a man is born into the world.

He hath used a comparison which the Prophets also use continually, likening despondency to the exceeding pains of childbirth. What He saith is of this kind: "Travail pains shall lay hold on you, but the pang of childbirth is the cause of joy," both confirming His words relative to the Resurrection, and shewing that the departing hence is like passing from the womb into the light of day. It is as though He had said, Marvel not that I bring you to your advantage through such sorrow, since even a mother, to become a mother, passeth in like manner through pain. He also here implieth something mystical, that He hath loosened the travail-pangs of death, and caused a new man to be born of them. And He said not that the pain shall pass away only, but she doth not even remember it, so great is the joy which succeedeth. So also shall it be with the saints. And yet the woman doth not rejoice because a man hath come into the world, but because a son hath been born to her, for, had that been the case, nothing would have hindered the barren from rejoicing over another who beareth. Why, then, spake He thus? He introduced this example for this purpose, to shew that sorrow is for a season, but joy lasting; and to shew that death is a translation unto life; and to shew the great profit of their pangs. He said

⁹ St. Augustine.

not "a child hath been born," but "a man." To my mind He here alludeth to His own resurrection, and that He should be born, not unto that death which was of the birth-pang, but unto the kingdom; and therefore He said not "a child hath been born unto her," but "a man hath been born into the world^r."

And ye now therefore have sorrow: but I will see you again, and your heart shall rejoice, and your joy no man taketh from you.

I suppose that the saying, *But I will see you again, and your heart shall rejoice, and your joy no man taketh from you*, is not to be referred to the time when He was risen, and shewed them His flesh to behold and touch it; but rather to that time of which He had already said, "He that loveth Me shall be loved of My Father; and I will love Him, and will manifest Myself unto him." For in fact He was already risen, already had shewn Himself to them in the flesh, already was sitting at the right hand of the Father, when this same Apostle John, whose this Gospel is, said in his Epistle, "Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when He shall appear, we shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as He is^s." This vision is not for this life, but for the life to come; it is not temporal, but eternal. For "this is life eternal," saith He who is the Life itself, "that they might know Thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ Whom Thou hast sent^t." Of this seeing and knowing saith the Apostle, "Now we see through a glass darkly, but then face to face: now I know in part, but then shall I know even as I am known." This fruit of the Church's whole labour she now in longing travaileth withal, then is she to bring it to the birth in beholding; now travaileth in groaning, then to bring forth in praise.

This little while seems long to us, because it is yet

^r St. Chrysostom.

^s 1 St. John iii. 2.

^t St. John xvii. 3.

on ; when it shall be ended, then shall we feel how it has been. Then let not our joy be such as the bath, of which it is said, *The world shall rejoice ;* let us not in our travailing with this desire be not joy, sorrowful, but, as the Apostle saith, “ Re- g in hope, patient in tribulation ;” because the mother, to whom we are likened, rejoiceth for the thing which presently shall be, more than she sor- roweth for the present grief^a.

^a St. Augustine.

FOURTH SUNDAY AFTER EASTER.

THE EPISTLE.

ST. JAMES i. 17—21.

“ Every good gift and every perfect gift,” &c.

Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning.

Herein God differs from man, that God maketh, but man is made; and while He that maketh is always the same, that which is made must be capable of a beginning and of a middle, of addition and of growth. And God, indeed, doeth good, but to man good is done. And whereas God is perfect in all things, Himself equal, and like unto Himself, being all Light, and all Mind, and all Substance, and the Source of all good things; man, on the other hand, receives improvement and growth towards God. For just as God is always the same, so man also, being found in God, will continually get on towards God; since neither doth God ever grow slack in benefiting and enriching man, nor doth man cease to receive the benefit, and to be enriched by God^a.

Of His own will begat He us with the Word of truth, that we should be a kind of first-fruits of His creatures.

Whatsoever the Father determines to create, He creates by His Word, as the Apostle teaches, *Of His own will begat He us with the Word of truth.* Therefore the will of God concerning all things, whether they be begotten again, or are brought into being at the first,

^a St. Irenæus against Heresies, Bk. iv. xi. 1.

is in His Word, in whom He both makes and begets again [or regenerates] what He sees fit, as the Apostle again signifies, writing to the Thessalonians: "For this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you ^b."

Thou art not uncreated, O man, nor wast thou ever co-existent with God, as His own Word was; but receiving at this time the beginning of thy creation, because of His eminent goodness, thou art gradually learning from the Word the ordinances of God Who made thee ^c.

That men might be born of God, God was first born of men. For Christ is God, and Christ was born of men. It was only a Mother, indeed, that He sought on earth, for He had already a Father in Heaven: born of God, that He might create us; born of woman, that He might re-create us. Marvel not, O man, that thou art created a son by grace, that thou art born of God, according to His Word. The Word Himself was pleased first to be born of men, that thou mightest be born of God, and mightest be sure of it, and say to thyself, It was not without cause that God was pleased to be born of man, but for that He accounted me to be of some importance, that He should make me immortal, and be, for my sake, born after the manner of mortal men ^d.

Wherefore, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak.

Let us enjoy the hearing, while noiselessly the Truth speaketh to us from within. When it is sounded from without by the voice of him that readeth, of him that bringeth tidings, of him that preacheth, that reasoneth, commandeth, comforteth, exhorteth, nay, even of him that chanteth and singeth psalms; let them whose business it is to do these things fear to defile

^b St. Athanasius against the Arians, Dis. III., xxx. 61, 3.

^c St. Irenæus, Bk. ii. xxv. 3.

^d St. Augustine on St. John,

Tom. ii. 15.

their feet, and through love of men's praise creeping into their minds, make it their aim to please men*.

Slow to wrath.

For the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God.

Wherefore lay apart all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness, and receive with meekness the ingrafted Word, which is able to save your souls.

We must above all things know, that as often as we restrain the turbulent motions of the mind under the virtue of mildness, we are essaying to return to the likeness of our Creator. For when the mind is lashed with anger, its peace is torn and rent, as it were, the mind is thrown into confusion, so that it is not in harmony with itself, and loses the force of the Divine likeness. Let us consider, then, how great the sin of anger is, by which, while we part with mildness, the likeness of the image of the Most High is spoiled. By anger wisdom is parted with, so that we are left wholly in ignorance what to do, and in what order to do it; as it is written, "Anger resteth in the bosom of a fool[†];" in this way, that it withdraws the light of understanding, while by agitating it troubles the mind. By anger life is lost, even though wisdom seem to be retained; as it is written, "Anger destroyeth even the wise[‡]." For in truth the mind, being in a state of confusion, never puts it in execution, even if it has power to discern anything with good judgment. By anger righteousness is abandoned, *The wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God.* For whereas the agitated mind works up to harshness the decision of its reasoning faculty, all that rage suggests it accounts to be right. By anger all the kindness of social life is lost, for he that does not regulate his feelings by the reason that is proper to man, must needs live alone like a beast. By anger

* St. Augustine on St. John, Hom. lvii. 8.

† Eccles. vii. 9.

‡ Prov. xv. 1., LXX.

harmony is interrupted; by anger the light of truth is lost. For when wrath brings into the mind the darkness of perturbation, God hides therefrom the ray of the knowledge of Himself. By anger the brightness of the Holy Spirit is shut out^b.

Having been created, do I desire to be re-created? Thou art my God, my Creator, Who hast created me by Thy Word, and re-created me by Thy Word. But Thou createdst me by Thy Word, remaining God with Thee: Thou re-createdst me by Thy Word, made flesh for our sakes. "Teach Thou me," then, "to do Thy will, for Thou art my God." If Thou teach me not, I shall do mine own will, and my God will abandon me. Teach me to do Thy Will, for Thou art my God. Teach Thou me, for it cannot be that Thou art my God, and yet I am to be mine own masterⁱ.

THE GOSPEL.

ST. JOHN xvi. 5—15.

"Jesus said unto His Disciples, Now I go My way," &c.

But now I go My way unto Him that sent Me, and none of you asketh Me, Whither goest Thou? But because I have said these things unto you, sorrow hath filled your heart.

He saw what those words of His wrought in their hearts, for indeed, not yet having the spiritual consolation which through His Holy Spirit they were to have, that which they outwardly saw in Christ they feared to lose; and, because they could not doubt that they should lose Him, for that He spake truth, the human affection was saddened because the fleshly sight

^b St. Gregory, *Morals*, Bk. V. i. 78.
Ps. cxliii.

ⁱ St. Augustine, on

was left desolate. But He knew what was more expedient for them; for assuredly better is that inner sight wherewith the Holy Spirit would console them, not presenting a human body before the bodily sight, but infusing Himself into the hearts of such as believe; as in fact Christ goes on to say,

Nevertheless, I tell you the truth; it is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send Him unto you.

Which is as though He had said, It is expedient for you that this form of a servant be taken from you; I, indeed, the Word made Flesh, dwell in you; but I would not that ye should still love Me after the flesh, and, content with this milk, desire to be always babes. It is expedient for you that I go away, for if I depart not, the Paraclete will not come unto you. If I withdraw not from you the tender aliments wherewith I have fed you, ye will not hunger for solid meat; if in fleshly sort ye cleave to the flesh, ye will not be fit to receive the Spirit. For what meaneth this? *If I depart not, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send Him unto you.* Could He not, being here, send the Comforter? Who would say this? For it must not be imagined that Christ had left the place where that Spirit was, and was in such manner come from the Father, as not to abide in the Father. In short, how should He not have power, even being here, to send Him Whom we know to have come upon Him at His Baptism, and to have remained with Him; nay, indeed, from Whom we know He was at no time separable? Then what meaneth, *If I depart not, the Comforter will not come unto you;* but this, "Ye cannot receive the Spirit so long as ye persist in knowing Christ after the flesh." Thus Paul, when he had received the Spirit, said, "Though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet henceforth know we Him no more." For even the Flesh of Christ that man

knoweth not after the flesh, who spiritually knoweth the Word made Flesh^k. This surely our Good Master would intimate in saying, *For if I depart not, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send Him unto you.*

But when Christ withdrew Himself bodily, not only the Holy Spirit, but both Father and Son were present with them spiritually. For if Christ departed from them in such manner that the Holy Spirit was in them instead of Him, not with Him, what became of His promise, "Lo I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world," and, "we will come unto him," I, and the Father, "and will make our abode with him," seeing He hath promised in such manner to send the Holy Ghost as Himself to be with them for ever? and therefore since of carnal they were to be made spiritual, doubtless they were to have both Father and Son and Holy Ghost, in more abundant measure. Only we must not imagine that the Father is in any man without the Son and the Holy Ghost, or the Father and the Son without the Holy Ghost, or the Son without the Father and the Holy Ghost, or the Holy Ghost without the Father and the Son, or the Father and the Holy Ghost without the Son; but where any one of them is, there is the Trinity, One God. It was necessary, however, that the notion of Trinity should be in such manner conveyed to us, that

^k "For even the Flesh of Christ that person knoweth not after the flesh, but after the Spirit, who acknowledgeth the virtue of His Resurrection not by curiously handling, but by assuredly believing, not saying in his heart, *who shall ascend into heaven, &c.*, (Rom. x. 6—10). Since, then, this blessedness of not seeing, yet believing, we should in no wise have, did we not receive it from the Holy Ghost, with good reason it is said, 'It is expedient for you,' &c. By His Godhead, indeed, He is ever with us, but unless He had departed bodily from us, we should always have seen His Body carnally, and never have spiritually believed with that belief by which, being justified and blessed, we are made meet with cleansed heart to behold that self-same Word-God with God, by Which all things were made, and Which was made Flesh to dwell in us."—St. Aug. on John xvi. 7—11.

though there be no diversity of substance, yet by several mention we should be apprized of the distinction of Persons; in which to them who rightly understand, there can never seem to be a separation of the natures¹.

And when He is come, He will reprove (or convince, marg.) the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgement:

Of sin, because they believe not on Me;

Of righteousness, because I go to My Father, and ye see Me no more;

Of judgement, because the prince of this world is judged².

Of sin.

This meaneth, "will cut off all their excuse, and shew that they have transgressed unpardonably."

Of righteousness, because I go to the Father, and ye see Me no more.

That is, I have exhibited a blameless life, and this is the proof, that *I go to the Father*. For, since they continually urged against Him that He was not from God, and therefore called Him a sinner and transgressor, He saith that the Spirit shall take from them this excuse. "For if My being deemed not to be from God, sheweth Me to be a transgressor, when the Spirit shall have shewn that I am gone thither, not for a season merely, but to abide, what will they say then?"

Ye shall see Me no more, "In such manner as I am, while I am with you." He was still mortal, in the likeness of sinful flesh, such that it was possible for Him to hunger and thirst, to be wearied, and to sleep.

¹ St. Augustine.

² "The proof that He was righteous, was His going to God and being with Him. . . . Were I not righteous I should not go to the Father. For how should one that is a sinner and an impostor, a transgressor of the Law and an adversary of God, go to Him that is righteous and true, the Lawgiver and God? . . . *Of sin*, then; that they sin, not believing: *of righteousness*; that I am righteous, and not a sinner as they say: *of judgement*, i.e. condemnation; that the prince of the devils is condemned, as My enemy, and not My friend."—*Euthymius*.
Note to Rom. xcv., St. Aug., St. John. St. Chrysostom.

This Christ, then, i.e. such a Christ as this, when He should have passed from this world unto the Father, they should see no more. "When ye shall see Me, as I shall then be; ye will not see Me as I am now. Not see Me lowly, but lofty; not see Me mortal, but eternal; not see Me as One to be judged, but as Him that shall judge."

Of judgement, because the prince of this world is judged.

Here, again, mooteth He the argument concerning righteousness, that He hath overthrown His opponent^p. Now, had He been a sinner, He could not have overthrown him, a thing which even a just man had not been strong enough to do; "but that he hath been condemned through Me; they shall know who trample on him hereafter, and who clearly know My Resurrection, which is the mark of Him Who condemneth him. For he was not able to hold Me."

I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now. "Therefore it is expedient for you that I depart, if ye then will bear them when I am departed." And what hath come to pass? Is the Spirit greater than Thou that now indeed we bear not, but It will fit us to bear? Is Its working more powerful and more perfect? Not so. For "He, too, shall speak My words;" wherefore Christ saith,

Howbeit, when He, the Spirit of Truth, is come, He will guide you into all truth: for He shall not speak of Himself; but whatsoever He shall hear, that shall He speak: and He will shew you things to come. He shall glorify Me, for He shall receive of Mine, and shall shew it unto you. All things that the Father hath are Mine.

Since Christ had told them that "He shall teach you and bring to your remembrance," and shall "comfort you in your afflictions," (which He Himself did not); and that, *It is expedient for you that I should depart*, and that He shall come; and, now ye are not able to bear, but then ye shall be able; and, that *He shall*

• St. Augustine.
in Lent.

^p See the Gospel for the Third Sunday

lead you into all truth; lest, hearing these things, they should suppose the Spirit to be the greater, and so fall into an extreme opinion of impiety, therefore He saith, *He shall receive of Mine*. That is, whatsoever things I have told you, He shall also tell you. When He saith, He shall speak nothing of Himself, Christ meaneth, "Nothing contrary, nothing of His own opposed to My words." As, then, in saying respecting Himself, *I speak not of Myself*, He meaneth that He speaketh nothing beside what the Father saith, nothing of his own against Him, or differing from Him; so also with respect to the Spirit. But *of Mine* meaneth, "of what I know," "of My own knowledge, for the knowledge of Me and of the Spirit is one."

What meaneth He by *all truth*? for He testifieth of the Spirit that *He shall guide us into all truth*. Because Christ was clothed with the flesh, and because He would not seem to speak concerning Himself, and because they did not yet know clearly concerning the Resurrection, and were too imperfect; and also because of the Jews, that these might not think they were punishing Him as a transgressor; therefore He spake no great thing continually, nor plainly drew them away from the Law. "So that it proceedeth not from ignorance of Mine," He saith, "that I told you not what I should have told you, but from the infirmity of the hearers."

And He will shew you things to come.

He excited their minds, for the race of man is for nothing so greedy, as for learning the future. This, for instance, they continually asked Him, "Whither goest Thou?" "Which is the way?" To free them, therefore, from this anxiety, He saith, "He shall foretell you all things, so that ye shall not meet with them without warning¹."

He shall glorify Me, for He shall receive of Mine, and shall shew it unto you.

He shall glorify Me, may be understood thus; that

¹ St. Chrysostom.

the Spirit, by shedding abroad love in the hearts of the believing, and by making them spiritual, hath declared to them how the Son was equal with the Father, even He Whom erewhile they knew only after the flesh, and, as men, thought of Him as man. Or thus; that the Disciples being by that same love filled with boldness, and having their fear driven away, preached Christ unto men, and so His fame was spread abroad over all the earth: so that in saying, *He shall glorify Me*, it should be as though He had said, He shall take away your fear, and shall give you love, wherewith, being kindled to preach Me with more ardour, ye shall spread the savour, shall enhance the favour, of My glory throughout the world. For what they would do in the Holy Spirit, of this He spake as the doing of the Spirit Himself; just as also in that saying, "For it is not ye that speak, but the Spirit of My Father that speaketh in you^r."

All things that the Father hath are mine: therefore said I, that He shall take of Mine, and shall shew it unto you.

He shall take of Mine, and shall tell it unto you; hear ye this with catholic ears, with catholic minds take ye it in. For it does not follow from this, that, as some heretics have thought, the Holy Ghost is less than the Son; as if the Son received from the Father, and the Holy Ghost from the Son, with certain gradations of their natures. Far be it from us to believe this, far be it from us to say this, far be it from Christian hearts to think this. In fact, He Himself has straightway solved the question, and explained in what sense He said this. *All things, saith He, that the Father hath are Mine: therefore said I, that He shall take of Mine, and shall shew it unto you.* What would ye have more^s?

^r St. Matt. x. 20, E. V. *your Father*.

^s St. Augustine.

FIFTH SUNDAY AFTER EASTER.

THE EPISTLE.

ST. JAMES i. 22—27.

“Be ye doers of the Word,” &c.

Be ye doers of the Word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves.

The blessed Apostle James accosts the constant hearers of the Word of God, saying, *Be ye doers of the Word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves.* For not Him whose word it is, nor him by whom the word is spoken, but your own selves ye deceive. I, or whoever preaches the word to you, do not see your heart, and cannot judge what is passing inwardly in your thoughts. That which man cannot see, God seeth, from Whom the human heart cannot be hid. He seeth with what earnestness you hear, what you think, what you retain, what profit you make of His grace, with what earnestness you pray, how you beseech God for that you have not, how you give Him thanks for that you have; He knows Who will require it at your hands. We, [the preachers,] are able to put out the Lord's money; the Exactor will come, Who said, Thou wicked servant, thou shouldst have given My money to the exchangers, and at My coming I should have received Mine own with usury.

Do not, then, my brethren, deceive yourselves, because ye have come with earnestness to hear the word, if, failing, ye do not what ye hear. Think, if it is beautiful to hear, how much more beautiful to do. If you do not hear, if you neglect hearing, you build

thing. If you hear, and do not, you build a ruin. The similitude of the Lord Christ set forth on this object is most apposite; "Whosoever," saith He, "heareth My words and doeth them, I will liken him to a wise man, which built his house upon a rock. And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house, and it fell not^a." Why did it not fall? "because it was founded upon rock." To hear and do them, is to build upon a rock. For the very hearing is building. "But everyone," saith He, "that heareth these sayings of Mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man which buildeth." He, too, builds. What does he build? Lo, he builds "his house," but because he does not what he hears, even in building, he builds "upon the sand." So then, whoso heareth and doeth not, buildeth upon the sand; whoso heareth and doeth, buildeth upon a rock; whoso doth not hear at all, buildeth not, neither upon the sand, nor upon a rock. Let us see what follows; "The rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house, and it fell; and great was the fall of it." Miserable spectacle^b!

For if any be a hearer of the Word, and not a doer, is like unto a man beholding his natural face in a glass. For he beholdeth himself, and goeth his way, and straightway forgetteth what manner of man he was. But whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed.

We ought to look upon the commandments of God, whether when they are read, or when they are recalled to memory, as a looking-glass. The Psalmist, when he saith, "I shall not be confounded when I have respect unto all Thy Commandments," wisheth to be such as the Apostle James describeth in these latter words, that

^a St. Matt. vii. 24—27.

^b St. Aug. Ser. N. T. cxxix.

he may regard as in a looking-glass the Commandments of God, and may not be confounded, because he chooses to be not merely a hearer of them, but a doer. On this account he desireth that his ways may be made direct, to keep the statutes of God. How be made direct, save by the grace of God? The man who looketh into the Commandments of God, and doeth them not, will find in them not a source of rejoicing, but of confusion^c.

There are many who most studiously examine into the words of wisdom, wishing for wisdom in doctrine, not in life; not that so they may reach the light of God, which is wisdom herself, by means of the conduct which wisdom prescribes, but that by means of the discourses which she yieldeth, they may reach the praise of men, which is vain-glory. They, therefore, do not seek wisdom, even when they are seeking her, because they do not seek her for her own sake, otherwise they would live according to her precepts; but they wish to be puffed up with her words, and the more they are puffed up, the further are they placed without her pale^d.

If any man among you seem to be religious, and bridleth not his tongue^e, but deceiveth his own heart, this man's religion is vain.

Speaking well of the worthy, never ill of the unworthy, we shall attain the glory and kingdom of God^f.

Often, when the tongue is not withheld from idle words, a loose is given to the rashness of foolish reviling. For it is by degrees that the slothful soul is driven downward into the pitfall. Thus, while we neglect to guard against idle words, we are brought to mischievous ones, so that first finding satisfaction

^c St. Augustine on Ps. cxix. 8.

^d Ibid., 145.

^e "The tongue is a royal steed. If, then, thou put a bridle on it, and teach it to pace orderly, the king will rest and take His seat thereon; but if thou suffer it to rush about unbridled, and leap wantonly, it becomes a beast for the Devil and bad spirits to ride on."—St. Chrysostom, Hom. ii. in Mat.

^f St. Irenæus.

in speaking of the concerns of others, afterwards the tongue of detraction carps at the life of those of whom it speaks, and sometimes even breaks out into open revilings. Hence, the incitements are sown of angry passions, jars arise, the fire-brands of animosity are kindled, and peace is altogether extinguished in the hearts of men.

That every one that is given to much talking cannot maintain the straight path of righteousness the Prophet testifies, in that he saith, "For an evil speaker shall not be led right upon the earth^s." Hence, again, Solomon saith, "In the multitude of words there wanteth not sin^h." Hence Isaiah saith, "And the cultivation of righteousness silence;" so pointing out that the righteousness of the interior is desolated, when we do not withhold our tongues from immoderate talking. Hence James saith, *If any man among you seem to be religious, and bridleth not his tongue, but deceiveth his own heart, this man's religion is vain.* Hence he says, again, "Let every man be swift to hear, slow to speakⁱ." Hence he adds, again, "The tongue is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison^k." Hence "Truth" warns us by His own lips, saying, "Every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment." For an idle word is such as lacks either cause of just occasion, or purpose of kind serviceableness. If, then, an account is demanded for idle speech, it is very deeply to be considered what punishment followeth after that much talking, wherein we sin even by words of pride.

Furthermore, be it known that they are lost to the whole estate of righteousness altogether, who let themselves go in mischievous words. For the mind of man, like water, when closed round is collected on high, in that it seeks anew the source whence it descended, and

^s Ps. cxl. 11.

^h Prov. x. 19.

ⁱ James i. 19.

^k James iii. 8.

when let loose it comes to nought, in that it dissipates itself to no purpose down below. For the mind is, as it were, drawn out of itself in so many streams, as it lets itself out in superfluous words from the strict control of silence. And hence it has no power to turn back within to the knowledge of itself, in that being dissipated without in much talking, it loses the strength of interior reflection. Therefore it lays itself bare in every part to the inflictions of the plotting enemy, in that it does not hedge itself about with any defence for its safe keeping. Whence it is written, "He that hath no rule over his own spirit in his talk, is like a city that is broken down, and without walls¹." For because it is without the wall of silence, the city of the mind lies open to the darts of the enemy; and when it casts itself forth in words, it exhibits itself exposed to the adversary, and he gets the mastery of it with less trouble, in proportion as the soul that he has to overcome combats against its own self by much talking. But herein, be it known, that when we are withheld from speaking by excess of fear, we are sometimes confined within the strait bounds of silence beyond what need be. And whilst we avoid the mischiefs of the tongue without caution, we are secretly involved in worse. For oftentimes, while we are overmuch restrained in outward speech, we are subject to a mischievous degree of talking in the heart, the thoughts being the hotter within, the more they are confined by the violent keeping of indiscreet silence, and most often they let themselves take a wider range in proportion as they reckon themselves to be more secure, in that they are not seen by censors without. Whence the mind is lifted up in pride, and regards as weak those persons whom it hears engaged in talk. And while it keeps the mouth of the body shut, it knows not to what degree it is laying itself open to evil by

¹ Prov. xxv. 28

entertaining pride. For it keeps the tongue down, but it sets the heart up. And whereas from inattention it never takes heed to itself, it censures all the world more freely, in proportion as it censures it more secretly. Most frequently, too, over-silent people, when they meet with wrongs, are driven to the bitterer grief, the more they keep back the utterance of all that they are undergoing. If the tongue declared with calmness the annoyance inflicted, grief would flow away from our consciousness. For closed wounds give more acute pain, in that when the corruption that ferments within is discharged, the pain is laid open favourably for our recovery. And generally whilst over-silent men fix their eyes on the faults of any, and yet hold in the tongue in silence, they do, as it were, withdraw the use of the salve, after looking on the wounds. They become the cause of death, in that they refuse by speaking to cast out the poison which they might cast out. If immoderate silence were not a thing to blame, the Prophet would never say, "Woe is me, for I have held my peace^m."

What, then, is to be done by us, saving that the tongue must be needfully kept in under the pressure of a mighty control; but not that it must be indissolubly chained, lest either being let loose it run out into mischief, or being bound up, it be slack to render service. For hence it is said by one, "A wise man will hold his tongue till he sees opportunity," that when he accounts it convenient, strictness of silence being laid aside, by speaking such things as are meet, he may devote himself to answer the end of usefulness. Hence Solomon saith, "A time to keep silence, and a time to speak." For the seasons for changes are to be weighed with discretion, lest either when the tongue ought to be restrained, it let itself out to no purpose in words, or when it might speak to good purpose, it keep

^m Isa. vi. 5, Vulg.

itself in from sloth. Which the Psalmist considering, comprehended in a brief petition*, saying, "Set a watch, O Lord, before my mouth; and a door of guard on my lips^a."

Pure religion, and undefiled before God and the Father, is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction.

Wherein a man is able to do good unto his neighbour, and doeth it not, therein will he be deemed alien from the love of God^b.

And to keep himself unspotted from the world.

Let us take diligent heed, by the help of our Lord God, that we cause not in men an evil security by telling them, that if they have been baptized in Christ, of what nature soever their lives in that faith shall have been, they shall come unto eternal salvation; that we make not Christians in the manner in which the Jews made proselytes, unto whom the Lord says, "Woe unto you, Scribes and Pharisees, who compass sea and land to make one proselyte, and when he is made, ye make him twofold more the child of hell than yourselves^c." But let us rather hold the sound doctrine of God our Master in both things; that there be a Christian life in harmony with holy Baptism, and that eternal life be promised to no man, if either be wanting. For He who said, "Except a man be born again of water, and of the Spirit, he shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven^d;" Himself also said, "Except your righteousness exceed the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees^e, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven^f."

[Because evil speaking is, as it were, the biting the flesh of a brother]. Paul utters the fearful saying, "If

* Ps. cxli. 8. * St. Gregory, *Morals*, bk. vii. * St. Irenæus.
^a St. Matt. xxiii. 15. ^c St. John iii. 5. ^d St. Matt. v. 20.
^e St. Augustine, *De fide et operibus*.

bite and devour one another, take heed that ye be consumed one of another^a." Thou hast not fixed teeth in the flesh, but thou hast fixed the slander to the soul, and the ill opinion; thou hast harmed, in thousand ways, thyself and him, and many others, first, in slandering a neighbour, thou hast made a man who listens to the slander worse; for should he be a wicked man, he becomes more careless when he finds a partner in his wickedness; and should he be a just man, he is lifted to arrogance, and puffed up; being led on by the sin of others to imagine great things concerning himself. Next, thou hast struck at the common welfare of the Church; for all those who are not only accuse the supposed sinner, but the reach of the accusation is fastened on the Christian community; and believers, instead of accusing the individual who has sinned, accuse all Christians. Thirdly, thou hast used the Name of God to be blasphemed; for as His name is glorified when we have good report, so when we sin, it is blasphemed and despised.

A fourth charge is that thou hast disgraced him who was reported; and hast thus rendered him more shameful than he was, by placing him in a state of enmity and hostility. Fifthly, thou hast made thyself liable to chastisement and vengeance, by involving thyself in matters which in no way concerned thee.

And let not any one reply, "I am an evil speaker when I speak falsely, but not when I speak what is true." Although it be with truth that thou speakest ill, this also is a crime. For that Pharisee spake evil of the Publican with truth; nevertheless, this availed him nothing. For was not the latter, I ask, a publican and a sinner? It is manifest to every one that he was a publican; but at the same time, inasmuch as the Pharisee spoke ill of him, he departed from the temple with the loss of every advantage. Dost thou wish to

^a Gal. v. 15.

correct a brother? Weep; pray unto God; taking him apart admonish, counsel, entreat him. Shew thy charity towards the sinner. Persuade him that it is from care and anxiety for his welfare, and not from a wish to expose him, that thou puttest him in mind of his sin. Shew the wound unto the priest; that is the part of one who cares for him, that is providing for him, that is being anxious for him.

But not only do I now admonish the evil speakers, but those besides, who hear others ill spoken of, I exhort to stop their ears, and to imitate the prophet, who saith, "Whoso privily slandereth his neighbour, him will I punish." Say to thy neighbour, "Hast thou any one to praise or highly to commend? I open my ears to receive the fragrant oil; but if thou hast any evil to say, I block up the entrance to thy words; for I am not to admit dung and dirt. What profit doth it afford me to learn that such a one is a bad man? The greatest injury indeed results from this, and the worst loss!" Say to him, "Let us be anxious about our own faults; how we may render up an account of our own transgressions; and let this curiosity and scrutiny be spent on our own lives. What excuse or pardon shall we find, whilst we never even take into consideration our own affairs, but thus inquisitively pry into those of others!" And as it is mean and extremely disgraceful to stare into a house, and to observe what is within as one passes, so also to make inquisition into another man's life is the last degree of illiberality.

But what is yet more ridiculous is, that those who lead this sort of life, and are neglectful of their own affairs, when they have mentioned any of these secret matters, beseech and adjure him who has heard it not to mention it again to any other person; thus making it plain that they have done an action which deserves

censure. For if thou beseechest him to tell this to no other person, much more did it not become thee to tell it first to him. The matter was safe while in thy possession; now, after betraying it, thou art grown anxious about its safety. If thou art desirous that it be not carried abroad to another, do not thyself tell it. But when thou hast betrayed the custody of the matter to another, thou doest what is superfluous and useless, in charging him, and putting him on oath for the safety of what has been spoken.

“But it is sweet to slander.” Nay, it is sweet not to speak evil. For he that hath spoken evil is henceforth anxious; he is suspicious, and he fears, repents and gnaws his own tongue; being timorous and trembling, lest at any time what he said should be carried to others, and bring great peril, and useless and needless enmity on the sayer. But he who keeps the matter to himself, will spend his days in safety, with much pleasantness. “Thou hast heard a word,” it says, “let it die with thee; and be bold: it will not burst thee*.” What is the meaning of this? “Let it die with thee.” Extinguish it; bury it; neither permit it to go forth, nor even to move at all; but, in the best course, be careful not to tolerate others in the practice of evil speaking. And should you perchance at any time receive an impression from it, bury it, destroy what has been uttered, deliver it over to oblivion, in order that you may become like those who have not heard it, and spend the present life with much peace and security. Should the slanderers learn that we detest them more than those do whom they accuse, they themselves will henceforth abandon this evil habit, and correct the sin, and will afterwards applaud and proclaim us as those who were their saviours and benefactors. For as to speak well, and to applaud, is the beginning of friendship:

* Ecclus. xix. 10.

so, to speak ill, and to calumniate, has been the beginning and foundation of enmity, and hatred, and a thousand quarrels. From nothing else have our own affairs been more neglected, than from the habit of wearying ourselves with the concerns of others, and curiously searching into them; for it is not possible for one who is given to evil speaking, and busying himself with other men's lives, even to look after his own life. His whole study being expended in the scrutiny of other men's matters, all those which belong to himself must of necessity be left to chance and neglected. For it is well if one who spends all his leisure on the anxious consideration of his own sins, and the judgment of them, can make any progress. But when thou art always busy about other men's matters, art thou ever likely to be concerned respecting what is evil in thine own?

Let us flee then, beloved, let us flee slander! knowing that it is the very gulph of Satan, and the place where he lurks with his snares. For in order that we may be careless of our own state, and may thus render our account heavier, the devil leads us into this custom. But more than this; it is not only a very serious matter, that we shall hereafter have to give account for what we have spoken, but that we shall make our own offences the heavier by these means, depriving ourselves of all excuse. For he who scans with bitterness the conduct of others, can never obtain pardon for the sins committed by himself. For God will determine the sentence, not only from the nature of our transgressions, but from the judgment which we have passed upon others. Therefore He gave the admonition, "Judge not, that ye be not judged." For the sin, of whatever kind, will not thus appear any more such as it was when committed, but will receive a great and unpardonable addition from the judgment

passed by thee upon thy fellow-servants. For as he who is humane, and merciful, and forgiving, cuts away the great bulk of his sins; so he who is bitter, and cruel, and implacable, greatly increases the magnitude of his own offences. Let us then expel from our mouth all slander, knowing that if we do not abstain from it, though we might feed upon ashes, this austerity would avail us nothing. "For not that which entereth into, but that which cometh out of the mouth defileth the man²." If anyone were to stir up a cesspool when you were passing, say, would you not reproach and rate the man who did it? This, then, do also with respect to the slanderer. For the stirred cesspool does not so grossly offend the sense of those who smell that ill savour, as the stirring up other men's sins, and taking away the covering from an impure life, offends and disturbs the soul of those who hear of it. Therefore let us abstain from evil speaking, from foul language, from blasphemy; and let us not speak ill of our neighbours nor of God³!

THE GOSPEL.

• ST. JOHN xvi. 23—33.

"Verily, verily, I say unto you,
Whatsoever," &c.

Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whatsoerer ye shall ask the Father in My Name, He will give it you.

He sheweth the power of His Name, if, being neither seen nor called upon, but only named, He even so maketh us approved by the Father. But where did this take place? Where they say, "Lord, behold their threatenings: and grant unto Thy servants, that with all bold-

² St. Matt. xv. 17, 18.

³ St. Chrysostom, Hom. iii. on the Statues.

ness they may speak Thy word, . . . and that signs and wonders may be done by the Name of Thy Holy Child Jesus. And . . . the place was shaken where they were assembled ^b."

Hitherto have ye asked nothing in My Name: ask, and receive, that your joy may be full.

This which He calleth full joy, is, we know, not carnal, but spiritual joy; and when it shall be so great that no more can be added thereto, without doubt then it will be *full*. Whatever, therefore, is asked that hath to do with the obtaining of this joy, this, if we understand the grace of God, if we crave the life which is truly blessed, is to be asked in the Name of Christ ^c.

These things have I spoken unto you in proverbs: the time cometh when I shall no more speak unto you in proverbs.

"There shall be a time when ye shall know all things clearly." He speaketh of the time of the Resurrection. "Then,

I shall shew you plainly of the Father."

(For He was with them and talked with them forty days, being assembled with them, and speaking of the things concerning the Kingdom of God,)—"because now being in fear ye give no heed to My words; but then when ye see Me risen again, and converse with Me, ye will be able to learn all things plainly; for the Father Himself will love you, when your faith in Me hath been made firm ^d."

At that day ye shall ask in my Name: and I say not unto you, that I will pray the Father for you; for the Father Himself loveth you, because ye have loved Me.

Does He love because we love? and not rather because He loves, therefore love we? Let the same Evangelist answer from his Epistle: "We love Him," saith He, "because He first loved us." Therefore,

^b Acts iv. 29, 31. St. Chrysostom.

^c St. Augustine.

^d St. Chrysostom.

that we loved, came of this, that we were beloved. To love God is altogether the gift of God. That He was beloved, was His own gift, Who, not being beloved, loved us. When we were displeasing Him we were loved, that so there should be that in us whereby we should be pleasing to Him. For we could not love the Son except we loved the Father also. The Father loveth us because we love the Son; since it is of Father and Son we have received that we love both Father and Son: for He that sheddeth abroad love in our hearts is the Spirit of Them both, by which Spirit we love both the Father and the Son, and which Spirit we love together with the Father and the Son. Our pious love, therefore, wherewith we worship God, God made, and saw that it was good; He therefore loved what Himself had made. But He would not have made in us what He should love, unless He had already loved us.

And ye have believed that I came out from God. I came forth from the Father, and am come into the world: again, I leave the world, and go to the Father.

Yea, we have indeed believed. For it ought not to be thought incredible, that in coming to the world He in such manner came out from the Father as not to quit the Father; and in leaving the world in such manner goeth unto the Father as not to quit the world. For that He came out from the Father, means that He is of the Father; that He came into the world, means that He shewed to the world the Body which He took unto Him of the Virgin. He left the world by corporal departure; He went His way unto the Father by ascension of the manhood, yet quitted not the world by governance of His Presence.

His disciples said unto Him, Lo, now speakest Thou plainly, and speakest no proverb. Now are we sure that Thou knowest all things, and needest not that any man should ask Thee: by this we believe that Thou camest forth from God.

Throughout the Gospel there are many indications

of what manner of persons Christ's disciples were when, speaking with them before His Passion, He discussed great things with small persons. For in such manner He spake to them as it was meet that great things should be spoken to small persons, because, having not yet received the Holy Ghost in such sort as they received Him after the Resurrection, they savoured the things of men more than the things of God. From this proceeds what is now said by them. The Lord Himself had said just before, *These things have I spoken unto you in proverbs, the hour cometh when I shall no more speak unto you in proverbs.* How then say these, *Lo, now speakest Thou plainly, and speakest no proverb?* Was the hour now come at which He had perceived that He would no more speak in proverbs? nay, that that hour was not yet come is shewn by the context of His words, for throughout He is promising that hour at which He shall no more speak in proverbs, but shall openly tell them of the Father; at which hour, He saith, they shall ask in His Name, and that He will not pray the Father for them, because the Father Himself loveth them, for that they have loved Christ, and believed that He came forth from the Father and came into the world, again to leave the world and go to the Father. I say then, since He is throughout still promising that hour in which He will speak without proverbs, why do they say, *Lo, now speakest Thou plainly, and speakest no proverb?* except because the things which He knows to be proverbs to them that understand not, they are so far from understanding that they do not so much as perceive that they understand them not. For they were babes, and did not spiritually discern what they heard of things pertaining not to the body, but to the spirit.

And, in fact, admonishing them of the littleness and weakness of their age as touching the inner man,

Jesus answered them, Do ye now believe? Behold, the

hour cometh, yea is now come, that ye shall be scattered every man to his own, and shall leave Me alone : and yet I am not alone, because the Father is with Me^e.

Seest thou in what an imperfect state the disciples were? After so many and great things spoken, they say, "now we know." Then, when, as though conferring a favour upon Him, they say, "Now we know," He replieth, "Ye still require many other things to come to perfection ; nothing is as yet achieved by you. Ye shall presently betray Me to My enemies, and such fear shall seize you, that ye shall not even be able to retire one with another, yet from this shall I suffer nothing dreadful." Seest thou again how condescending is His speech? And indeed He makes this a charge against them, that they continually needed condescension. For when they say, *Lo, now speakest Thou plainly, and speakest no parable*, "and therefore we believe Thee," He sheweth them that now, when they believe, they do not yet believe, neither doth He accept their words^f.

These things I have spoken unto you, that in Me ye may have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation ; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world.

The beginning of this tribulation would be that of which He spoke above: *Do ye now believe? Behold, the hour cometh, yea, is now come, that ye shall be scattered every man to his own.* Behold the beginning of the tribulation, which, however, was not to last in that manner unto the end. For whereas He adds, *And leave Me alone*, He does not mean that in the tribulation which they should suffer in the world after His Ascension they would then be such as to leave Him, but that in Him they should have peace by abiding in Him. For when He was apprehended, it was not merely that they with their flesh left His Flesh, but also with their minds they left the faith of Him. It

^e St. Augustine.

^f St. Chrysostom.

is regarding this that He saith, *Do ye now believe? Behold, the hour cometh, that ye shall be scattered every man to his own, and shall leave Me*: as much as to say, Then ye will be thrown into such perturbation, that even what ye now believe, ye will forsake. For they were reduced to such desperation, yea, to such a death (so to speak) of their former faith. This appears in Cleophas, who said, "We trusted that it had been He which should have redeemed Israel^c." Lo, how they had left Him by deserting even the very faith whereby they once believed on Him. In the tribulation, however, which they endured, when, after He was glorified, they had received the Holy Ghost, they did not leave Him; and although they fled from city to city, they fled not as deserters from Him; but having tribulation in the world, they held fast their peace in Him. The reason of this was that they were not as deserters seeking refuge away from Him, but had Him for their refuge. For when the Holy Ghost was given to them, that was wrought in them which now was said to them, *Be of good cheer, I have overcome the world*. They were of good cheer, and they overcame. In whom, but in Him? For He would not have overcome the world, could the world overcome His members. Whence the Apostle saith, "Thanks be to God Who giveth us the victory;" and straightway adds, "through our Lord Jesus Christ;" through Him Who had said to His own, *Be of good cheer, I have overcome the world*^d.

^c St. Luke xxiv. 21.

^d St. Augustine.

THE ASCENSION DAY.

THE EPISTLE.

Acts i. 1—11.

**“The former treatise have I made,
O Theophilus,” &c.**

The former treatise have I made, O Theophilus, of all that Jesus began both to do and to teach, until the day in which He was taken up.

But John says, that were all this written, he supposes “that even the world itself could not contain the books that should be written^a.” How, then, does the Evangelist here say *of all*? He does not say “all,” but *of all*; as much as to say, “in a summary way,” and in the gross; “and” of all that is mainly and pressing important. Then he tells us in what sense he says “all,” when he adds, *Which Jesus began both to do and to teach*; meaning, His miracles and teaching; and not only so, but implying that His doing was also a teaching.

But consider how Christ accredited His words by His deeds. Thus He saith, “Learn of Me, for I am meek and lowly in heart^b.” He taught men to be poor, and himself exhibited this poverty. “The Son of Man,” He says, “hath not where to lay His head^c.” Again, He charged men to love their enemies; and He taught the same lesson on the Cross, when He prayed for those who were crucifying Him. He said, “If any

^a St. John xxi. 25.

^b St. Matt. xi. 29.

^c Ibid. viii. 20.

man will sue thee at the law, and take away thy coat, let him have thy cloke also^d:" now He not only gave them His garments, but also His blood. In this way He bade others teach. Wherefore Paul also said, "Mark them which walk so as ye have us for an example^e." For nothing is more frigid than a teacher who shews his philosophy only in his words: this is to act the part not of a teacher, but of a hypocrite. Therefore the Apostles first taught by their conduct, and then by their words; nay, rather they had no need of words, when their deeds spoke so loud. Nor is it wrong to speak of Christ's Passion as action, for in suffering all, He performed that great and wonderful act, by which He destroyed death, and effected all else that He did for us.

Until the day in which he was taken up, after that He through the Holy Ghost had given commandments unto the Apostles whom He had chosen.

After He had given commandment through the Spirit, what did He command? "Go ye therefore," He says, "and teach all nations, baptizing them in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you^f." A high encomium this for the Apostles, to have such a charge entrusted to them, I mean the salvation of the world! words full of the Spirit! And this the writer hints at in the expression, "through the Holy Ghost;" (and, "the words which I spake unto you," saith the Lord, "are Spirit^g;") thus leading the hearer on to a desire of learning what the commands were, and establishing the authority of the Apostles, seeing it is the words of the Spirit they are about to speak, and the commandments of Christ. It appears, then, that He also taught the disciples after His resurrection, but of this

^d St. Matt. v. 40.

^e Philipp. iii. 17.

^f St. Matt. xxviii. 19, 20.

^g St. John vi. 63.

space of time no one has related to us the whole in detail. However, we have learnt these things through the Apostles, for what they heard, that did they teach.

To whom also He shewed Himself alive. Having first spoken of the Ascension, he adverts to the Resurrection; for since thou hast been told that "He was taken up," therefore, lest thou shouldest suppose Him to have been taken up by others, he adds, "To whom He shewed Himself alive." For if He shewed Himself in the greater, surely He did in the lesser circumstance. Seest thou how, casually and unperceived, he drops by the way the seeds of these great doctrines?

Being seen of them during forty days. He was not always with them now, as He was before the Resurrection. For the writer does not say "forty days," but, "during forty days." He came, and again disappeared: by this leading them on to higher conceptions, and no longer permitting them to stand affected towards Him in the same way as before, but taking effectual measures to ensure both that the fact of His Resurrection should be believed, and that He Himself should be ever after apprehended to be greater than man.

But why did He appear not to all, but to the Apostles only? Because to the many it would have seemed a mere apparition, inasmuch as they understood not the secret of the mystery. For if the disciples themselves were at first incredulous, and were troubled, and needed the evidence of actual touch with the hand, and of His eating with them, how would it in all likelihood have fared with the multitude? For this reason, therefore, by the miracles wrought by the Apostles, He renders the evidence of His Resurrection unequivocal, so that not only the men of those times,—this is what would come of the ocular proof—but also all men thereafter, should be certain of the fact,

that He was risen. Upon this ground also we argue with unbelievers. For if He did not rise again, but remains dead, how did the Apostles perform miracles in His Name? But they did not, say you, perform miracles? How, then, was our religion instituted? For this certainly they will not controvert, nor impugn what we see with our eyes: when they say that no miracles took place, they inflict a worse stab upon themselves. For this would be the greatest of miracles, that without any miracles, the whole world should have eagerly come to be taken in the nets of twelve poor and illiterate men. For not by wealth of money, not by wisdom of words, not by anything of this kind, did the fishermen prevail; so that objectors must even against their will acknowledge that there was in these men a Divine power, for no human strength could ever possibly effect such great results. For this He then remained forty days on earth, furnishing in this length of time the sure evidence of their seeing Him in His own proper Person, that they might not suppose that what they saw was a phantom. And not content with this, He added also the evidence of eating with them at their board: as to signify this, the writer adds, "And being at table with them^b, He commanded." And this circumstance the Apostles themselves always put forth as an infallible token of the Resurrection; as where they say, "Who did eat and drink with Him^c."

And what did He, when appearing unto them those forty days? "Why, He conversed with them," says the writer, "concerning the kingdom of God." For, since the disciples had been both distressed and troubled at the things which already had taken place, and were now about to go forth to encounter great difficulties, He recovered them by His discourses concern-

^b E. V., being assembled together with them. *Marg., eating together with them.*

^c Acts x. 41.

ing the future. First He led them out to Galilee, afraid and trembling, in order that they might listen to His words in security. Afterwards, when they had heard, and had passed forty days with Him, He *commanded them that they should not depart from Jerusalem.* Wherefore? Just as when soldiers are to charge a multitude, no one thinks of letting them issue forth until they have armed themselves; or as horses are not suffered to start from the barriers until they have got their charioteer; so Christ did not suffer these men to appear in the field before the descent of the Spirit, that they might not be in a condition to be easily defeated and taken captive by the many. Nor was this the only reason, but also there were many in Jerusalem who should believe. And again, that it might not be said, that, leaving those who knew them, they had gone to make a parade among strangers, therefore among those very men who had put Christ to death do they exhibit the proofs of His Resurrection, among those who had crucified and buried Him, in the very town in which the iniquitous deed had been perpetrated; thereby stopping the mouths of all foreign objectors. For when those even who had crucified Him appear as believers, clearly both the fact of the crucifixion and the iniquity of the deed are proved, and a mighty evidence of the Resurrection is afforded. Furthermore, lest the Apostles should say, How shall it be possible for us to live among wicked and bloody men, they so many in number, we so few and contemptible; observe how He does away their fear and distress by these words, *But wait for the promise of the Father, which ye have heard of Me.*" You will say, When had they heard this? When He said, "It is expedient for you that I go away; for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you^k." And again, "I will pray the Father, and He will send you another Comforter, that He may abide with you for ever^l."

^k St. John xvi. 7.

^l St. John xiv. 16.

But why did the Holy Ghost come to them, not while Christ was present, nor even immediately after His departure, but, whereas Christ ascended on the fortieth day, the Spirit descended "when the day of Pentecost," that is the fiftieth, "was fully come?" And how was it, if the Spirit had not yet come, that He said, "Receive ye the Holy Ghost?" It was in order to render them capable and meet for the reception of Him. For if Daniel^a fainted at the sight of an angel, much more would these when about to receive so great a grace^p. Either this, then, is to be said, or else that Christ spoke of what was to come, as if come already; as when He said, "Behold, I give you power to tread upon serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy^q." But why had the Holy Ghost not yet come? It was fit that they should first be brought to have a longing desire for His coming, and to receive the grace. For this reason Christ Himself departed, and then the Spirit descended. For had He Himself been present, they would not have expected the Spirit so earnestly as they did. On this account neither did He come immediately after Christ's Ascension, but after eight or nine days. It is the same with us also; for our desires towards God are then most raised when we feel our need of His help. Accordingly, John sent his disciples to Christ at the time of his own imprisonment, when they were likely to feel their need of Jesus. Besides, it was fit that our nature should be seen in heaven, and that the reconciliation should be perfected, and then the Spirit should come, and the joy should be unalloyed. For if the Spirit being already come, Christ had then departed, and the Spirit remained; the consolation would not have been so great as it was. For they clung closely to their Lord, and could not bear to part with Him; where-

^a Acts ii. 1.^p St. John xx. 22.^q Dan. viii. 17.^r See the Gospel for the First Sunday after Easter.^s St. Luke x. 19.

fore also to comfort them He said, "It is expedient for you that I go away^r." On this account He also waits during those intermediate days, that they might first despond for a while, and be made, as I said, to feel their need of Him, and then reap a full and unalloyed delight. But if the Spirit were inferior to the Son, the consolation would not have been adequate; and how could Christ have said, "It is expedient for you?" For this reason the greater matters of teaching were reserved for the Spirit, that the disciples might not imagine Him inferior.

Consider also how necessary He made it for them to abide in Jerusalem, by promising that the Spirit should be granted there. For lest they should again flee away after His Ascension, by this expectation, as by a bond, He keeps them to that spot. But having said, *Wait for the promise of the Father, which ye have heard of Me*; He then adds, *For John truly baptized with water, but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence*. For now indeed, He gives them to see the difference there was betwixt Him and John plainly, and not as heretofore, in obscure hints; for, in fact, He had spoken very obscurely, when He said, "Notwithstanding, he that is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he^s;" but now He says plainly, *John baptized with water, but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost*. And He no longer uses the testimony, but merely adverts to the person of John, reminding the disciples of what he had said, and shews them that they have now become greater than John; seeing they, too, are to baptize with the Spirit. Again, He did not say, "I baptize you with the Holy Ghost," but, *ye shall be baptized*; teaching us humility. For this was plain enough from the testimony of John, that it was Christ Himself who should baptize: "He it is that shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire^t."

^r St. John xvi. 7.

^s St. Matt. xi. 11.

^t St. Luke iii. 16.

The Gospels, then, are a history of what Christ did and said; but the Acts, of what that "other Comforter" said and did. Not but that the Spirit did many things in the Gospels also; even as Christ in the Acts still works in men as He did in the Gospels; only then the Spirit wrought through the Temple, now through the Apostles: then He came into the Virgin's womb, and fashioned the Temple; now, into Apostolic souls: then, in the likeness of a dove; now, in the likeness of fire. And wherefore? Shewing there the gentleness of the Lord, but here His taking vengeance, He now puts them in mind of the judgment likewise. For, when need was to forgive, need was there of much gentleness; but now we have obtained the gift, it is henceforth a time for examination and judgment.

But why does Christ say, *Ye shall be baptized*, when, in fact, there was no water in the upper room? Because the more essential part of Baptism is the Spirit, through whom indeed the water has its operation; in the same manner our Lord is said to be anointed, not that He had ever been anointed with oil, but because He had received the Spirit. Besides, we do, in fact, find them receiving a baptism with water, and a baptism with the Spirit, and these at different moments. In our case, both take place under one act, but then they were divided. For in the beginning they were baptized by John; since, if harlots and publicans went to that baptism, much rather would they who thereafter were to be baptized by the Holy Ghost*. Then, that the Apostles might not say, that they were always having it held out to them in promises, (for, indeed, Christ had already discoursed much to them concerning the Spirit, that they should not imagine It to be an impersonal Energy or Operation,) that they might not say this, then He adds, *not many days hence*. And He did not explain when, that they might always watch;

* St. John xiv. 15, 16.

but that they might not faint, He told them that it would soon take place; yet the exact time He refrained from adding, that they might also be vigilant.

When they therefore were come together, they asked Him, saying, Lord, wilt Thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel? They did not ask when? but whether *at this time*. So eager were they for that day. Indeed, to me it appears that they had not any clear notion of the nature of that kingdom; for the Spirit had not yet instructed them. And they did not say, *When shall these things be?* but they approach Him with greater honour, saying, *Wilt Thou at this time restore again the kingdom?* as being now already fallen. For then they were still affected towards sensible objects, seeing they were not yet become better than those who were before them; here they have henceforth higher conceptions concerning Christ. Since then their minds are elevated, He also speaks to them in a higher strain. For He no longer tells them, “of that day, not even the Son of Man knoweth^{*} ;” but He says, *It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in His own power.* Ye ask things greater than your capacity, He would say. It is not about the general consummation that they now ask Him, but they say, *Wilt Thou at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?* And not even this did He reveal to them.

But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you. As in the former instance He had not answered their question, (for it is the part of a teacher to teach not what the disciple chooses, but what is expedient for him to learn;) so in this, He tells them beforehand, for this reason, what they ought to know, that they may not be troubled. In truth, they were yet weak. But to inspire them with confidence, He raised up their souls, and concealed

^{*} St. Mark xiii. 32.

what was grievous. Since He was about very shortly to leave them, therefore in this discourse He says nothing painful. But how? He extols as great the things that would be painful; all but saying, "Fear not:" for, *Ye shall receive power after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you; and ye shall be witnesses unto Me, both in Jerusalem, and in all Judæa, and in Samaria.* For since He had said, "Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not," what there He left unsaid, He here adds, *And unto the uttermost parts of the earth;* and having spoken this, which was more fearful than all the rest, then, that they may not again question Him, He held His peace. And having this said, *While they beheld, He was taken up, and a cloud received Him out of their sight.*

Not while they beheld did He rise from the dead, but, *While they beheld He was taken up.* In the Resurrection they saw the end, but not the beginning; and in the Ascension they saw the beginning, but not the end; because in the former it had been superfluous to have seen the beginning, the Lord Himself Who spake these things being present, and the sepulchre shewing clearly that He was not there; but in the latter, they needed to be informed of the end by word of others. Inasmuch then as their eyes do not suffice to shew them the height above, nor to inform them whether He is actually, or only seemingly, gone up into heaven, see what follows. That it was Jesus Himself they knew from the fact that He had been conversing with them, (for had they seen Him only from a distance, they could not have recognised Him;) but that He is taken up into heaven, the Angels inform them. Observe how it is ordered, that not all is done by the Spirit, but their own eyes also do their part. But why did *a cloud receive Him?*

This, too, was a sure sign that He went up to heaven. Not fire, as in the case of Elijah, nor fiery chariot, but *a cloud received Him*; which was a symbol of heaven, as the Prophet says, "Who maketh the clouds His chariot^a;" it is of the Father Himself that this is said. Therefore he says, "on a cloud;" in the symbol, he would say, of the Divine Power, for no other power is seen to appear on a cloud^a. Hear, again, what another Prophet says: "The Lord sitteth upon a light cloud^b." As a king is shewn by the royal chariot, so was the royal chariot sent for Him. O what a sight was granted to them! *While they looked stedfastly, it is said, toward heaven, as He went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel; which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven,—they used the expression, This, demonstratively, saying, This Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall thus—demonstratively, "in this way"—come, in like manner as ye have seen Him going into heaven.*

The Angels did not say, "Whom ye have seen taken up," but *Going into heaven*; ascension is the word, not assumption; the expression, *taken up*, belongs to the flesh^c. For the same reason they say, "He which is taken up from you shall thus come," not, "shall be sent," but, *shall come*. "He that ascended, the same is He also that descended^d." So again the expression, *a cloud received Him*: for He Himself mounted upon the cloud. Of the expressions, some are adapted to the conceptions of the disciples, some agreeable with the Divine Majesty. Now, as they behold, their conceptions are elevated: He has given them no slight

^a Ps. civ. 3.
in Advent, p. 18.

^b Isa. xix. 1.

^c i.e. The angels had before used the phrase of *assumption*; but this does not express the whole matter; therefore, to shew that it is the act of His own Divine power, they now say, *going*, and afterwards express it that *He will come*, not that He will be sent. He ascended as He descended, by His own Divine power.

^d Eph. iv. 10.

hint of the nature of His second coming. For these words, "Shall thus come," means with the body, which thing they desired to hear; and that He shall come again to judgment "thus," upon a cloud^c.

The Angels said, *This same is Jesus*; as though they would say, "If ye believe Him, this is that same Jesus at Whose crucifixion your feet stumbled, at Whose death and burial ye thought your hopes were lost. Lo, this is the same Jesus. He hath gone up before you, He shall so come in like manner as ye have seen Him go into heaven. His Body is removed indeed from your eyes, but God is not separated from your hearts: see Him going up, believe on Him absent, hope for Him coming; but yet through His secret mercy feel Him present. For He Who ascended into heaven that He might be removed from your eyes, promised unto you, saying, 'Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world.'^d"

THE GOSPEL.

ST. MARK xvi. 14—20.

"Jesus appeared unto the eleven," &c.

Jesus appeared unto the eleven as they sat at meat, and upbraided them with their unbelief and hardness of heart, because they believed not them which had seen Him after He was risen.

Since they were to preach that "He that believeth not shall be condemned," were not they themselves to be first rebuked, because before they saw the Lord they had not believed those to whom He had first appeared^e.

Let us hear the words which He speaks, after rebuking the hardness of their hearts:

Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature.

^a St. Chrysostom.

^b St. Aug. on Ps. xlvii.

^c St. Aug., Cat. Aug.

Every man must be understood by *every creature*. The Gospel is preached to every creature, because he is taught by it, for whose sake all are created, unto whom all things are in some way like, and from whom therefore they are not alien. By the name of every creature also, every nation of the Gentiles may be meant. For it had been said before, "Go not into the way of the Gentiles^h." But now it is said, *Preach the Gospel to every creature*; so that the preaching of the Apostles, which was thrust aside by the Jews, might be brought to our aid; Judæa having haughtily rejected it, thus witnessing to her own damnationⁱ.

He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved.

They first then teach all nations, and when taught, dip them in water. For it may not be that the body receive the Sacrament of Baptism, unless the soul first embrace the truth of the faith^k.

Thus all nations are created a second time to salvation by that one and the same Power, which created them to being^l.

Perhaps some one may say in himself, I have already believed, I shall be saved. He says what is true, if he keeps his faith alive by works: for that is a true faith, which does not contradict by its deeds what it confesses in words. Then follows—

But he that believeth not shall be damned^m.

When we hear, *He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved*, we do not of course understand it of one who believes in such a way as "the devils believe and trembleⁿ;" nor of those who receive Baptism in such sort as Simon Magus, who, though he could be baptized, could not be saved. When, therefore, He said, *He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved*, He had not in His view all who believe and are baptized, but some only; those, to wit, who are settled in that faith

^h St. Matt. x. 5.

ⁱ St. Gregory, Cat. Aur.

^k St. Jerome, Cat. Aur. in Matt.
in Matt.

^l Chrysologus, Cat. Aur.

^m St. Gregory, Cat. Aur.

ⁿ St. James ii. 19.

which, according to the Apostle's distinction, worketh by love^o.

And these signs shall follow them that believe : In My Name shall they cast out devils ; they shall speak with new tongues ; they shall take up serpents ; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them ; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover.

Are we then without faith, because we cannot do those signs? Nay, but these things were necessary in the beginning of the Church, for the faith of believers was to be nourished by miracles, that it might increase. Thus we, when we plant trees, pour water upon them, until we see that they have grown strong in the earth; but when once they have firmly fixed their roots, we leave off irrigating them. Thus Paul said, "Tongues are for a sign, not to them that believe, but to them that believe not^p." These signs and miracles have other points which we ought to consider more minutely. For Holy Church does every day in spirit what then the Apostles did in body; for when her priests, by the grace of exorcism, lay their hands on believers, and forbid the evil spirits to dwell in their minds, what do they but cast out devils? And the faithful who have left earthly words, and whose tongues sound forth the holy mysteries, speak a new language; they who by their good warnings take away evil from the hearts of others, take up serpents: and they who are hearing words of pestilent persuasion, without being at all drawn aside to evil doing, they drink a deadly thing, but it will not hurt them; whenever they see their neighbours growing weak in good works, and by their good example strengthen their life, they lay their hands on the sick, that they may recover. And all these miracles are greater in proportion as they are spiritual, and by them souls and not bodies are raised^q.

^o St. Augustine, Ser. N. T. xxi.

^p 1 Cor. xiv. 22.

^q St. Gregory, Cat. Aur.

So, then, after the Lord had spoken unto them, He was received up into heaven, and sat on the right Hand of God.

Jesus, having finished His race of patience, and having redeemed men from their sins, ascended again into the heavens, a cloud receiving Him: and Angels stood by as He went up, and Apostles gazed. If any doubt what he hears, let him believe the power of what he now sees. All kings, when they die, have their power extinguished with their life; but Christ, after being crucified, is worshipped by the whole world. We proclaim the Crucified, and the devils tremble; yet many others have in course of time been crucified, but when has the invocation of any one of these scared away the devils^r?

We may observe that Elias mounted up to heaven in a chariot, that by this might be understood that a mere man, in rising from the earth, requires help from without. But our Redeemer, as we read, was not carried up in a chariot, neither by angels, because He who had made all things was borne over all by His own power. We must also consider what Mark says: *And sat on the right Hand of God*, since Stephen says, "I see the heavens opened, and the Son of Man standing on the right Hand of God." Now sitting is the attitude of a judge; standing, of one fighting, or giving help. Therefore Stephen, when toiling in the contest, saw Him Whom he had for his help, standing; but Mark describes Him after His assumption into heaven as sitting; because, after the glory of His assumption, He will in the end be seen as Judge^s.

Let us not curiously pry into what is properly meant by the throne, for it is incomprehensible: nor let us endure those who falsely say that it was after His Cross and Resurrection and Ascension into hea-

^r St. Cyril, Catech. Lect. iv. 13.

^s St. Augustine, Cat. Aur.

ven, that the Son began to sit on the right Hand of the Father¹. For the Son gained not His throne by advancement, but from the time that He is, (and He is ever begotten,) He also sitteth together with the Father. And this throne the Prophet Esaias having beheld before the incarnate coming of the Saviour, says, "I saw the Lord sitting on a throne, high and lifted up²," &c. For the Father no man hath seen at any time, and He Who then appeared to the Prophet was the Son. And the Psalmist says: "Thy throne is established of old: Thou art from everlasting³."

The 110th Psalm also says plainly, "The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit Thou on My right Hand, until I make Thine enemies Thy footstool⁴:" and the Saviour, confirming this in the Gospel, says⁵, that David spake not these things of himself, but by the inspiration of the Holy Ghost. And in the Acts of the Apostles, Peter, on the day of Pentecost, has cited this same testimony from the 110th Psalm⁶.

It was not then after His coming in the flesh that He obtained the dignity of this seat. No; for even before all ages, the Only-Begotten Son of God, Who is our Lord Jesus, ever has the throne on the right Hand of the Father. Now may He Himself, the God of all, Who is Father of Christ, and our Lord Jesus Christ, Who came down, and ascended, and sitteth together with the Father, watch over your souls; keep unshaken and unchanged your hope in Him Who rose again; raise you together with Him from your dead sins to His heavenly gift; count you worthy to be caught up in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air⁷ in His fitting time, and until that time arrives of His glorious second advent, write all your names in the book of the living; and having written them, never blot them out (for many, those who fall away, have

¹ The Paulianists. ² Isa. vi. 1. ³ Ps. xciii. 2. ⁴ Ps. cx. 1.
⁵ St. Matt. xxiii. 43. ⁶ Acts ii. 14. ⁷ 1 Thess. iv. 17.

their names blotted out); and may He grant to all of you to believe on Him Who rose again, and to look for Him Who is gone up, and is to come again, (to come, but not from this earth, for be on your guard, oh man, because of the deceivers who are to come); Who sitteth on high, and is here present together with us beholding the order of each one, and the steadfastness of his faith^c. For think not that because He is absent in the flesh, He is therefore absent also in the Spirit. He is here present in the midst of us, listening to what is said of Him, and beholding what is in thy mind, and trying the reins and the hearts^d. Who also is now ready to present those who are coming to Baptism, and all of you in the Holy Ghost to the Father, and to say, Behold I and the children whom God hath given Me^e. To whom be glory for ever. Amen^f.

And they went forth, and preached everywhere, the Lord working with them, and confirming the Word with signs following. Amen.

But how was this preaching fulfilled by the Apostles, since there are many nations in which it has just begun, and others in which it has not yet begun to be fulfilled? Truly this precept was not so laid upon the Apostles by our Lord, as though they alone to whom He then spoke were to fulfil so great a charge; in the same way as He says, "Behold, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world," apparently to them alone; but who does not understand that the promise is made to the Catholic Church, which, though some are dying, others are born, shall be here unto the end of the world^g.

Christ Jesus our Lord did Himself while He lived in the world declare what He was, what He had been, of what will of His Father He was the Minister, what He determined should be done by man,—either openly

^c Col. ii. 5.

^d Rev. ii. 23.

^e Isa. viii. 18;

Heb. ii. 13.

^f From St. Cyril's Lect. xiv. (to Candidates for

Baptism).

^g St. Augustine, Cat. Aur.

to the people, or privately to His disciples, out of whom He had chosen to be attached to His Person twelve principal ones, the destined teachers of the nation. Wherefore, one of them being struck off, He, when departing to the Father after His Resurrection, commanded the other eleven to go and teach all nations, who were to be baptized into the Father, and into the Son, and into the Holy Ghost. Immediately, therefore, the Apostles (whom this title *Apostle* intendeth to denote as *sent*), having chosen by lot a twelfth, Matthias, into the room of Judas, on the authority of a prophecy which is in a Psalm of David^b, and having obtained the promised power of the Holy Spirit for the working of miracles and for utterance, first having throughout Judæa borne witness to the faith in Jesus Christ, and established Churches, next went forth into the world, and preached the same doctrine of faith to the nations, and forthwith founded Churches in every city, from whence the other Churches thenceforward borrowed the tradition of the Faith and the seeds of doctrine, and are daily borrowing them, that they may become Churches. And for this cause they are themselves also accounted Apostolical, as being the offspring of Apostolical Churches. The whole kind must needs be classed under their originalⁱ. Wherefore these Churches, so many and so great, are but that one primitive Church from the Apostles, whence they all spring. Thus all are primitive, and all Apostolical, while all are one.

On this principle, therefore, we shape our rule; that if the Lord Jesus Christ sent the Apostles to preach, no others ought to be received as preachers than those whom Christ appointed; for "no man knoweth the Father save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son

^b Ps. cx. 7; Acts i. 20.

ⁱ "Since, further, all Bishops are successors of the Apostles, and have their authority from them, every bishopric is an apostolic see."
—St. Gregory, M.

hath revealed Him.” Neither doth the Son seem to have revealed Him to any other than to the Apostles, whom He sent to preach,—to wit, that which He revealed unto them. Now what they did preach, that is, what Christ did reveal unto them, I will here also rule, must be proved in no other way than by the testimony of those same Churches which the Apostles themselves founded; themselves, I say, by preaching to them as well *virâ voce*^k (as men say), as afterwards by Epistles. If these things be so, it becometh forthwith manifest that all doctrine which agreeth with these Apostolic Churches, the wombs and originals of the faith, must be accounted true, as without doubt containing that which the Churches have received from the Apostles, the Apostles from Christ, Christ from God; and that all other doctrine must be judged at once to be false, which savoureth things contrary to the truth of the Churches, and of the Apostles, and of Christ, and of God^l.

^k 2 Thess. ii. 15: “Therefore, brethren, stand fast, and hold the tradition which ye have been taught, whether by word, or our Epistle.”

^l Tertullian, De Præscr. Hær.

SUNDAY AFTER ASCENSION DAY.

THE EPISTLE.

1 ST. PETER iv. 7—11.

“The end of all things is at hand,” &c.

The end of all things is at hand ; be ye therefore sober, and watch unto prayer.

Let no one search out for the last Day, when it is to be ; but let us all watch, lest the last day of any one of us find us unprepared, for such as any one shall depart hence at his last day, such will he be found in the last Day of the world. Nothing will then assist thee which thou shalt not have done here. His own works will succour, or his own works will overwhelm, every one^a.

Our Lord tells not His disciples the hour in which “the Son of man cometh,” with the intent that they may watch, that they may be always ready. If the common sort of men knew when they were to die, they would surely strive earnestly at that hour. In order, therefore, that they may strive, not at that hour only, He tells them not either the common hour or the hour of each, desiring them to be ever looking for it, that they may be always striving. Wherefore he hath made the end of each man’s life uncertain^b.

Be ye therefore sober, and watch unto prayer.

Since continuing in prayers frequently makes persons listless, Paul saith [in the Epistle to the Colossians], “continue in prayer, watching in the same^c ;” watch-

^a St. Augustine, Ser. xlvii.

^b St. Chrysostom on St. Matthew xxiv. 43.

^c Col. iv. 2.

ing, that is, *sober*, not wandering. For the devil knoweth, he knoweth how great a good prayer is; therefore he presseth heavily. Paul also knoweth how careless many are when they pray, wherefore he saith, "Continue [i.e. persevere] in prayer," as of somewhat laborious^d.

And above all things have fervent charity among yourselves; for charity shall cover the multitude of sins.

What hope is there if from this life [i.e. since Baptism], we have contracted sins? Before all, confession: lest any think himself righteous, and, before the eyes of God who seeth that which is, lift up the neck. Before all, then, Confession; then love; for of charity what is said? *Charity shall cover the multitude of sins.*

"Behold Christ is the Propitiation for our sins: not ours only, but also the sins of the whole world. And hereby we do know that we know Him, if we keep His commandments^e." What commandments? "A new commandment," saith the Lord, "I give unto you, that ye love one another. By this we know that we are in Him, if in Him we be perfected^f." Perfected in love, he calls them: what is perfection of love? To love even our enemies, and to love them that they may become brethren. For not a carnal love ought ours to be. To wish a man temporal weal is good, but though that fail, let the soul be safe. Dost thou wish life to any that is thy friend? Thou doest well. Dost thou rejoice at the death of thine enemy? Thou doest ill. But haply both to thy friend the life thou wishest him is not for his good, and to thine enemy the death thou rejoicest at hath been for his good. It is uncertain whether this present life be profitable or unprofitable to any man: but the life which is with God, without doubt is profitable. So love thine enemies as to wish them to become thy

^d St. Chrysostom on Col. iv. 2.

^e 1 St. John ii. 2, &c.

^f St. John xiii. 34; not E. V.

brethren; so love thine enemies as that they may be called into thy fellowship. For so loved He, Who, hanging on the cross, said, "Father^a, forgive them; for they know not what they do^b."

"To this end was the Son of God manifested, that He should undo the works of the devil^c." Consequently, to undo (or loose) sins; He that hath no sin. And then follows, "Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for His seed remaineth in him; and he cannot sin, because he is born of God^d." He has drawn the cord tight! Belike, it is in regard of some one sin that he hath said, "doth not sin," not in regard of all sin; that thou mayest understand the words, "whoso is born of God doth not sin," to be spoken of some one particular sin, which that man who is born of God cannot commit; and such is that sin that, if committed, it confirms all other sins. What is this sin? To do contrary to the commandment. What commandment? "A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another." Mark well; by this love sins are loosed. If this love be not kept, the not holding it is at once a grievous sin, and the root of all sins. Whoso is in brotherly love there are certain sins which he cannot commit, and this above all, that he should hate his brother. And how fares it with him concerning his other sins, of which it is said, "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us;" let him hear from another place of Scripture, that which shall set his mind at rest; *Charity shall cover the multitude of sins^e*.

Use hospitality one to another without grudging.

My brethren, acknowledge the duty of hospitality; thereby some have attained unto God. Thou takest in some stranger, whose companion in the way thou

^a St. Luke xlii. 84.

^b St. Aug. in 1 St. John ii.

^c 1 St. John i. 8.

^d 1 St. John iii. 8, 9.

^e St. Augustine on 1 St. John iii. 9.

art indeed thyself, for strangers are we all; he is a Christian, who even in his own country and in his own house acknowledges himself to be a stranger; for our country is above. If one be not a stranger here, let him not pass on thither. If we are all passing away, let us do something which cannot pass away, that when we shall ourselves have passed away, and have come thither whence we may not pass away, we may find our good works there. Christ is the keeper, why fear lest thou shouldest lose what thou spendest on the poor¹?

As every man hath received the gift, even so minister the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God. If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God; if any man minister, let him do it as of the ability which God giveth; that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom be praise and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.

In such manner does our Creator and Disposer order all things, that he who might be puffed up by the gift which he has, may be humbled by that virtue which he has not. He so regulates all things, that when He exalts any one by the grace bestowed, He also, by a different gift, makes one person inferior to another; and makes every one to look on him who is beneath him in one gift as superior to him in some other; so that though he feels that he is even in some respects superior, yet he may place himself in other respects below the very person whom he surpasses. God so regulates all things, that while all possess separate gifts, these gifts become, all of them, the property of each person separately, by a connecting bond of charity, and that thus every one so possesses in another that which he has not himself, that he humbly confers on the other that which he received as his own possession. For it is hence said by Peter, *As every one hath received*

¹ St. Augustine, Ser. lxi.

the gift, even so minister the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God. For the manifold grace of God is then well dispensed, when the gift which has been received is believed to belong even to him who does not possess it, when it is considered to have been given to a man's self on account of him in whose behalf it is exerted. Hence it is said by Paul, "By love serve one another^m." For charity then sets us free from the yoke of blame, when it engages us through love in mutual service, when we both believe that the goods of others belong to ourselves, and present our goods to others as though offering them their own. Hence it is again said by Paul, "The body is not one member, but many. If the foot shall say, Because I am not the hand, I am not of the body, is it therefore not of the body? And if the ear shall say, Because I am not the eye, I am not of the body, is it therefore not of the body? If the whole body were an eye, where were the hearing? If the whole body were hearing, where were the smellingⁿ?" And a little after, "And if they were all one member, where were the body? But now are they many members, yet but one body^o?"

For what is Holy Church, except the Body of its own heavenly Head? Wherein one is the eye, by beholding lofty things; another a hand, by performing right things; another a foot, by running to and fro at command; another an ear, by understanding the sound of the precepts; another a nose, by discerning the foulness of wicked, and the fragrance of good, deeds. And while they receive and discharge mutual good offices, like the limbs of the body, they make themselves together one single body. While they perform different offices in charity, they keep that from being different in which they are bound together. But were they all to do one and the same work, they

^m Gal. v. 13.ⁿ 1 Cor. xii. 14—17.^o 1 Cor. xii. 19, 20.

would assuredly not be a body, which is composed of many members; because it would not exist, as compacted of many parts, if this harmonious diversity of members did not bind it together. Because, then, the Lord divides to the holy members of His Church the gifts of virtues, Paul says, "As God hath divided to every one the measure of faith^p." And again, "From whom the whole body, fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love^q."

But since our Creator and Disposer with wonderful wisdom confers gifts on one, which He refuses to another, and refuses to one those gifts which He bestows on another; whoever aims at exercising an office for which he has not received the gift, endeavours to exceed the limits assigned to him. As if, perchance, he, to whom it has been only given to discuss the secret meaning of precepts, should attempt also to dazzle with miracles; or, as if he, whom the gift of heavenly virtue strengthens only for miracles, should strive, besides, to lay open the mysteries of the Divine Law. For he puts forth his foot on a precipice, who regards not the limits of his own measure. And he who boldly hastens to grasp those objects which he is unable to reach, commonly loses that power which was his. For we then use aright the services of our limbs, when we distinctly preserve them for their own offices. For with the eyes we behold the light, with the ears we hear a voice. But if any one, having inverted the order, applies his eyes to the voice, and his ears to the light, both are to him open in vain. If any one wishes to distinguish scents with his mouth, to taste flowers with his nose, he does away with the service of both senses, because he perverts them. For when they

^p Rom. xii. 3.

^q Eph. iv. 16.

are not applied to their proper uses, they both give up their own offices, and do not attain to those which are foreign to them^r.

THE GOSPEL.

ST. JOHN xv. 26, and part of Chap. xvi.

"When the Comforter is come, Whom I will send unto you," &c.

When the Comforter is come, Whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of Truth, Which proceedeth from the Father, He shall testify of Me: and ye also shall bear witness, because ye have been with Me from the beginning.

In the words which precede this portion of the Gospel, the Lord, strengthening His disciples to bear the hatred of their enemies, prepared them also by His example, that by imitating Him they might become the more courageous; further promising them that the Holy Ghost should come to bear witness of Him, and adding that they also should be made His witnesses, that is, by the Holy Ghost working this in them. For so He said, *He shall bear witness of Me, and ye shall bear witness.* That is, because He shall bear witness, ye shall bear witness likewise. He in your hearts, ye by your voices. He by inspiring, ye by uttering. So may that be fulfilled, "Their sound is gone out into all the earth^s." It was not enough to cheer them on by His example, but He must also fill them with His Spirit.

And ye, saith He, shall bear witness, because ye have been with Me from the beginning. For because ye have been with Me from the beginning, ye are able to preach that which ye know; and that ye do not this

^r St. Gregory, Morals on Job.

^s Ps. xix. 4.

now, is because that Spirit's fulness is not yet with you. He then shall bear witness of Me, and ye shall bear it. For to give you confidence to bear witness, there shall be the love of God shed abroad in your hearts by the Holy Spirit, Which shall be given to you. Which truly was yet lacking to Peter, when, frightened by the question of the woman-servant, he had not power to bear true witness; but, contrary to his own eager promising, was, by great fear, compelled thrice to deny Him. Now this fear is not in love, but "perfect love casteth out fear[†]." In fact, before the Lord's Passion, Peter's servile fear was interrogated by the woman of servitude; but after the Resurrection his free love was interrogated by the Prince of Liberty. And that is the reason why he there denied Whom he loved, and here loved Whom he had denied. Howbeit even then this same love of his was still weak and straitened, until the Holy Spirit should strengthen and enlarge it. Which Spirit, when it was by abundance of larger grace infused into him, did so set on fire his once cold breast to bear witness of Christ; and so unlocked those aforetime trembling lips which had suppressed the truth, that while all on whom the Holy Spirit came spake with tongues of all nations, among the crowds of Jews which stood around, he alone, more promptly than the rest, put himself forward to bear witness of Christ, and by testifying of His Resurrection confounded his murderers. Who loves to look upon such a sweet, holy spectacle, let him read the Acts of the Apostles; there be amazed at blessed Peter preaching Him Whom he had grieved in his denying; there see that tongue translated to boldness from cowardice, and to liberty from servitude; turning so many tongues of enemies to the confessing of Christ, when, because it had not had strength to bear a single one of these same tongues, itself had turned to the denying of Him. Such bright-

† 1 St. John iv. 18.

ness of grace, such fulness of the Holy Spirit appeared in him, such weight of most precious truth proceeded from his mouth as he preached, that of that huge multitude he made Christ's slayers, the Jews, ready to die for Him, even them by whom he once dreaded with Him to be put to death. This did the Holy Ghost, then sent,—aforetime promised. These His own great and marvellous benefits the Lord foresaw when He said, *When the Comforter is come, Whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of Truth Which proceedeth from the Father. He shall bear witness of me, and ye also shall bear witness.*

These things have I spoken unto you, that ye should not be offended.

Thus we sing in the Psalm, "Great peace have they which love thy law: and nothing shall offend them^a." With reason, after promising the Holy Spirit, by Whose operation in them they should be made His witnesses; He goes on to say, *These things have I spoken unto you, that ye be not offended.* For when "the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit Which is given us^b," great becomes their peace who love God's law, so that there is none offence to them.

Therefore, He now expressly tells them what they should suffer.

They shall put you out of the synagogues.

But what harm was it to the Apostles to be expelled from the Jewish synagogues, when they were about to separate themselves therefrom, even though none should expel them? True: but He would apprise them of this, that the Jews would not receive Christ, Whom they themselves would not leave; and so it would come to pass that they would be cast out with Him,—these who could not be without Him, by those who would not be in Him. For, doubtless, seeing there was none other people of God than that seed of Abraham, if

^a Ps. cxix. 165.

^b Rom. v. 5.

they would acknowledge and receive Christ, they would as natural branches remain in the olive-tree, and there would not be the Churches of Christ as one body, the synagogues of the Jews as another; for indeed they would be the same, if they would be in the Same. Which because they would not, what remained, but that, continuing out of Christ, they would needs put out of the synagogues those who would not forsake Christ. For assuredly, having received the Holy Ghost, and being thereby made His witnesses, they would not be such as those of whom it is said, "Nevertheless, among the chief rulers also many believed on Him; but because of the Pharisees they did not confess Him, lest they should be put out of the synagogue: for they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God^y." Ye see these believe on Him, but not so as He would have them believe, Who said, "How can ye believe which receive honour one of another, and seek not the honour that cometh from God only^z." When, therefore, the disciples so believe on Him, that being filled with the Holy Ghost, that is, with the gift of the Grace of God, they are not of the number of them who, "being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own, are not subject to the righteousness of God^a." Nor of those of whom it is said, "They loved the praise of men more than the praise of God^b." Then that prophecy accords with them which in their person is found fulfilled, "Lord, in the light of Thy countenance shall they walk, and in Thy Name exult all the day long; and in Thy righteousness shall they be exalted; because Thou art the glory of their strength^c." With good reason is it said to them, *They shall put you out of the synagogues*, they, to wit, who have a zeal for God, but not according to knowledge; for which cause, "being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish

^y St. John xii. 42, 43.

^z St. John v. 44.

^a Rom. x. 3.

^b St. John xii. 43.

^c Ps. lxxxix. 15.

their own," they expel them who not in their own, but in God's righteousness are exalted, and when they are expelled by men are not ashamed, because He is the glory of their strength.

Yea, the time cometh, that whosoever killeth you will think that he doeth God service. And these things will they do unto you, because they have not known the Father, nor Me.

That is, they have not known God nor His Son, to Whom, in killing you, they think that they do service. Which words the Lord hath added, as if by this to console His own, who should be expelled from the Jewish synagogues.

He seems to me to have meant that they should understand, and rejoice thereat, that they would gain so many for Christ when they should be driven out of the synagogues, that it would not be sufficient to expel them—no, they would not suffer them to live, lest by their preaching they should turn all men to the Name of Christ, and from the observance of Judaism, as if that were the truth of God. For this we must understand to be spoken of the Jews, *They will put you out of the synagogues*; for though the witnesses, i.e. martyrs of Christ, were put to death by the Gentiles, yet these did not think to do God service, but their own false gods, when they did these things; but of the Jews, whosoever killed the preachers of Christ, accounted that he did God service, believing that to be converted to Christ was to forsake the God of Israel.

This, therefore, is the meaning in these words, *They will put you out of the synagogues*; but fear ye not solitude, for, being separated from their congregation, ye will gather together so many in My Name, that those fearing lest the Temple which was with them, and all the Sacraments of the Old Law should be forsaken, will kill you, so shedding your blood that thereby they will think to do God service. See here what the Apostle hath said of them, "They have a zeal for God, but not

according to knowledge^d." They think they do God service in killing them of God's household. Oh awful error! So, to please God, dost thou smite him that pleaseth God, and is the living temple of God by thy stroke laid low, lest God's temple of stone be forsaken? Oh execrable blindness! Howbeit it is in part come upon Israel that the fulness of the Gentiles may come in. In part, I say, hath it befallen, not on the whole body, for not all, but some of the branches were broken off that the wild olive might be grafted in. For through the Holy Spirit filling Christ's disciples when they spake with tongues of all nations, when through them divine miracles were made frequent, and divine utterances scattered abroad, even the slain Christ was so beloved that His disciples, expelled from the congregations of the Jews, did from among the very Jews gather together a vast multitude, and had no solitude to fear. Therefore, incensed at this, the rest, reprobate and blind, "having a zeal for God but not according to knowledge," and thinking they were doing God service, killed them. But He that was slain for them did gather them; He Who before He was slain, had instructed them concerning these future things that they might not, being ignorant and unprepared, have their minds thrown into confusion by the shock of evils unthought-of and unforeseen, however speedily to pass away, but might by these evils, foreknown and taken patiently, be brought safe through to good things everlasting. For that this was the cause of His foretelling them of these things, He has Himself shewn in what He further saith,—

But these things have I told you, that, when their hour^e shall come, ye may remember that I told you of them.

Their hour, an hour of darkness, an hour of night! But in the day the Lord commanded His mercy, and

^d Rom. x. 2.

^e *Their hour*,—so the verse stands in the Codices of the Vatican and Alexandria. E.V., *the time*.

in the night declared it¹; then, when the night of the Jews could by no confusion bedim the day of the Christians now parted from it, and when, though it had power over the flesh to kill, it had none over the faith to make it darkness².

¹ Ps. xlii. 8.

² St. Augustine.

WHIT SUNDAY.

THE EPISTLE.

AcTS ii. 1—11.

“When the day of Pentecost was fully come,” &c.

When the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place.

JESUS went up into heaven, and fulfilled the promise. For He had said to them, “I will pray the Father, and He shall give you another Comforter^a.” They were accordingly sitting, looking for the coming of the Holy Ghost; *and when the day of Pentecost was fully come*, here, in this city of Jerusalem—(for this honour also belongs to us; and we speak not of good which has happened amongst others, but of that which has been vouchsafed among ourselves)—on the day of Pentecost, I say, they were sitting, and the Comforter came down from heaven, the Guardian and Sanctifier of the Church, the Ruler of souls, the Pilot of the tempest-tossed, the Enlightener of the lost, Who presides in the combat, and crowns the victors.

But He came down to invest the Apostles with power, and to baptize them: for the Lord says, “Ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence^b.” His grace is not in part, but His power is in full perfection; for as he who plunges into the waters, and is baptized, is encompassed on all sides by the waters, so were they also baptized completely by the Holy Ghost. The water, however, envelopes but outwardly, but the Spirit baptizes also the soul within, and that perfectly. And wherefore wonderest thou?

^a St. John xiv. 16.

^b Acts i. 5.

Take an example from matter; poor, indeed, and common, yet useful for the simpler sort. If the fire penetrating the mass of iron makes the whole of it fire, so that what was cold becomes burning, and what was black is made bright,—if fire which is a body thus penetrates and works without hindrance in iron which is also a body, why wonder that the Holy Ghost enters into the inmost recesses of the soul?

And lest men should be ignorant of the greatness of the mighty gift which was coming down to them, there sounded as it were a heavenly trumpet. For *suddenly there came a sound from heaven, as of a rushing mighty wind*, signifying the presence of Him Who was to grant unto men to seize with violence the kingdom of God; that both their eyes might see the fiery tongues, and their ears hear the sound. *And it filled all the house where they were sitting*; for the house became the vessel of the spiritual water; as the disciples sat within, the whole house was filled. Thus they were entirely baptized according to the promise, invested soul and body with a divine and saving garment. *And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them; and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost.* They partook of fire, not of burning but of saving fire, of fire which consumes the thorns of sins, and gives lustre to the soul. This is now coming upon you also^c, and that to strip away and devour your sins, which are like thorns, and to brighten that precious possession of your souls, and to give you grace; for He gave it then to the Apostles. And He sat upon them in the form of fiery tongues, that by fiery tongues their heads might be encircled with new and spiritual diadems. The fiery sword barred of old the gates of Paradise; the fiery tongue which brought salvation restored the gift^d.

And they began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.

^c Addressed to Candidates for Baptism. ^d S. Cyril, Cat. Lect., xvii.

They receive no other sign, but this first; for it was new to them, and there was no need of any other.

Observe how, when one is "continuing in prayer," when one is in charity, then it is that the Spirit draws near.

And there were dwelling at Jerusalem Jews, devout men, out of every nation under heaven.

The fact of their dwelling there was a sign of piety; that, being of so many nations, they should have left country, and home, and relations, and be abiding there^e.

Now when this was noised abroad, the multitude came together, and were confounded, because that every man heard them speak in his own language.

The multitude of the hearers was confounded; it was a second confusion, in the room of the first evil one at Babylon. For in that confusion of tongues there was division of purpose, because their feelings were ungodly; but here minds were restored and united, because the object of interest was godly. The means of falling were the means of recovery. Wherefore they marvelled, saying, "How hear we them speaking." No marvel if ye be ignorant; for even Nicodemus was ignorant of the coming of the Spirit, and to him it was said, "The Spirit breatheth where it listeth, and thou hearest the voice thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth^f;" but if even though hearing His voice, I know not whence He cometh, how can I explain what He is in substance^g?

And they were all amazed and marvelled, saying one to another, Behold, are not all these which speak Galileans? And how hear we every man in our own tongue wherein we were born? Parthians, and Medes, and Elamites, and the dwellers in Mesopotamia, and in Judæa, and Cappadocia, in Pontus, and Asia, Phrygia, and Pamphylia, in Egypt, and in the parts of Libya about Cyrene, and strangers of

^e St. Chrysostom.

^f E. V., "The Spirit bloweth, . . . and thou hearest the sound thereof." St. John iii. 8.

Cat. Lect., xvii.

^g St. Cyril,

Rome, Jews, and Proselytes, Cretes, and Arabians, we do hear them speak in our tongues the wonderful works of God.

Well might the multitude be confounded. Conscience agitated their souls, the very Blood of Christ being yet upon their hands, and everything alarmed them. *And how hear we every man in our own tongue,* (for from the greater part of the world were men assembled there,) *Parthians, and Medes, &c.* This nerved the Apostles, for what it was to speak the Parthian tongue they knew not, but now learned from what those said. Here is mention made of nations that were hostile to them, Cretans, Arabians, Egyptians, Persians; and that they would conquer them all was here made manifest. So, then, the testimony comes from all quarters; from citizens, from foreigners, from proselytes. *We do hear them speak in our tongues the wonderful works of God.* For it was not only that they spoke in their tongues, but the things they spoke were wonderful. Well, then, might they be in doubt, for never had the like occurred.

But let us look over what has been said from the beginning, *When the day of Pentecost was fully come . . . there came a sound from heaven, as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled, he says, the house.* That wind was a very pool of water. This betokened the copiousness, as the fire did the vehemence; this nowhere happened in the case of the prophets, for to uninebriated^b souls such accesses are not attended with much disturbance; but "when they have well drunken," then, indeed, it is as here, but with the prophets it is otherwise. The roll of a book^c is given

^b The expression "uninebriated," relates to the Old Testament, no such fire there, no mighty rushing wind, no vehement commotion: this comes of "the new wine" of the Spirit. There is an allusion here to St. John ii. 10.

^c Ezek. iii. 3. Why does Ezekiel receive the gift of prophecy, not by the likeness of fire, but by a book, while the Apostles receive the gift by fire? Why is it a book and writing there, here tongues

him, and Ezekiel ate what he was about to utter, "and it became in his mouth," it is said, "as honey for sweetness." To them it might well be in the form of a book, for they still needed similitudes. Those had to deal with only one nation, and with their own people; but these with the whole world, and with men whom they never knew. Also Elisha receives the grace through the medium of a mantle; another by oil, as David; and Moses by fire, as we read of him at the bush^k. But in the present case it is not so, for the fire itself sat upon them; but the story shews that the Spirit here given to the disciples is the same that was given to those, but more intense in operation; therefore it appears, not merely under the emblem of cloven tongues, but as tongues of fire. Such a fire as this is able to kindle infinite fuel. Also it is well said, "cloven," for they were from one root, that you may learn that it was an operation sent from the Comforter.

But observe how those men also were first shewn to be worthy, and then received the Spirit as worthy. Thus, for instance, David: what he did among the sheepfolds, the same he did after his victory and trophy, that it might be shewn how simple and absolute was his faith: again, see Moses despising royalty, and forsaking all, and after forty years taking the lead of the people; and Samuel, occupied there in the Temple; Elisha leaving all; Ezekiel again, made manifest by what happened thereafter^l. In this

and fire? Because there the prophet went his way to accuse sins, and to bewail Jewish calamities; whereas these went forth to consume the sins of the whole world. Therefore he received a writing, to call to mind the coming calamities; these fire, to burn up the sins of the world, and utterly abolish them. For as fire falling among thorns will with ease destroy them, even so the grace of the Spirit consumed the sins of men.—St. Chrysostom.

^k 2 Kings xiii.; 1 Sam. xvi. 13; Exod. iii. 2.

^l Exod. ii. 11; 1 Sam. iii. 3; 1 Kings xix. 21. Elsewhere St. Chrysostom makes it a special praise of Ezekiel, that he chose rather to accompany his people into captivity than to remain in his own

manner, you see, did these also leave all that they had. They learnt also what human infirmity is, by what they suffered; they learnt that it was not in vain they had done these good works. Even Saul, having first obtained witness that he was good, thereafter received the Spirit^m. But in the same manner as here did none of them receive. Thus Moses was the greatest of the prophets, yet he, when others were to receive the Spirit, himself suffered diminutionⁿ. But here it is not so; but just as fire kindles as many flames as it will, so here the largeness of the Spirit was shewn, in that each one received a fountain of the Spirit; as, indeed, He Himself had foretold, that those who believe in Him, should have "a well of water springing up into everlasting life^o;" and good reason that it should be so, for they did not go forth to argue with Pharaoh, but to wrestle with the devil. But the wonder is this, that when sent they made no objections; they said not, "they were weak in voice, and of a slow tongue^p." For Moses had taught them better. They said not they were too young. Jeremiah had made them wise^q. And yet they had heard of many fearful things, and much greater than were theirs of old time; but they feared to object. And because they were angels of light, and ministers of things above, *suddenly there came from heaven, &c.* To them of old, no one "from heaven" appears, while they as yet follow after a vocation on earth; but now that Man has gone up on high, the Spirit also descends mightily from on high,—*as it were a rushing mighty wind*; making it manifest by this, that nothing shall be able to withstand them, but they shall blow away all adversaries like a heap of dust^r.

land. In this manner, then, (he would say here) Ezekiel "left all," and having thus given proof of his worth, received the gift of prophecy.

^m 1 Sam. ix. and xi. 6.

iv. 14. ^p Exod. iv. 10.

ⁿ Alluding to Numb. xi. 17.

^o Jer. i. 8.

^q John

^r St. Chrysostom.

THE GOSPEL.

ST. JOHN xiv. 15—31.

“Jesus said unto His disciples, If ye love Me,” &c.

If ye love Me, keep My commandments. And I will pray the Father, and He shall give you another Comforter, that He may abide with you for ever; even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth Him not, neither knoweth Him: but ye know Him; for He dwelleth with you, and shall be in you.

Everywhere we need works and actions, not a mere show of words; for to talk and to promise are easy, but to act is not equally easy. Why do I say these things? Because there are many at this time who say that they fear and love God, while in their works they shew the contrary; but God requireth that love which is shewn by works. Wherefore He said to the disciples, *If ye love Me, keep My commandments.*

And I will pray the Father, and He shall give you another Comforter.

This He saith because it was probable that they, not yet knowing Him, would eagerly seek His society, His discourse, His presence in the flesh, and would admit of no consolation when He was absent.

And *another Comforter* [Paraclete] is “another like unto Me.” By saying *another* He sheweth the difference of Person, and by “Paraclete,” the connection of substance^s.

^s Christ Himself is called a *Paraclete* or *Advocate* by St. John: “We have an Advocate (Paraclete) with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.” (1 St. John ii. 1.)

The word *Paraclete*, as used in the New Testament, represents two Hebrew words, one signifying a *Comforter* (see the LXX. version of Job xvi. 2), the other an *Interpreter* or *Mediator*, an *Advocate* called in to plead a cause. Hence *Paraclete* sometimes signifies, as here, one who consoles or comforts by counsel and aid, and some-

"But why came not the Holy Ghost upon them while Christ was yet with them?" Because the Sacrifice was not yet offered; when He had cleansed them by the Sacrifice, then the Holy Ghost lighted upon them. When sin had been loosed, and they were being sent forth to dangers, and were stripping themselves for the contest, then need was that the Anointer should come. "But why did not the Spirit come immediately after the Resurrection?" In order that having become greatly desirous of It, they might receive It with great joy. For as long as Christ was with them, they were not in tribulation; but when He departed, being made defenceless and thrown into much fear, they would receive It with great readiness.

That He may abide with you for ever.

This sheweth that even after Death It departeth not. But lest, when they heard of the "Paraclete," they should imagine a second Incarnation, and expect to see It with their eyes, He setteth them right by saying, *Whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth Him not, neither knoweth Him: but ye know Him; for He dwelleth with you, and shall be in you.* "He will not be with you as I have been, but will dwell in your very souls." This is what *shall be in you* meaneth. He calleth It the Spirit of Truth; thus explaining the types in the Old Testament. What meaneth *may abide with you*? That which Christ Himself saith, that *I am*

times one who mediates or interprets, and presents petitions to another, as an *Intercessor*.

... The word is one of large acceptance; and it was probably chosen for that reason, as best signifying the manifold gifts and offices of the Holy Ghost, as the Sanctifier, Teacher, Comforter, Exhorter, Remembrancer, Inspirer, Enlightener, Counsellor, Guide, Helper, and Advocate of the Church.

Here the Paraclete is the Holy Ghost, Whom the faithful confess to be consubstantial with the Father and the Son. By calling the Person here promised to be sent, "*another Paraclete*," He shows that there is One Person Who sends, of the Son, and another to be sent, of the Holy Ghost.—See Notes in Bp. of Lincoln's Commentary.

with you. He implieth besides that “the case of the Spirit shall not be the same as Mine; He shall never leave you.”

Whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth Him not^t. But what is there belonging to the other Persons that is visible? Nothing; but because sight is clearer than the other senses, Christ speaketh of knowledge by the word *seeth*.

By *the world* He here designates the wicked; thus, too, comforting the disciples by giving to them a special gift. See in how many particulars He raised His discourse concerning It. He said, “He is another like unto Me;” He said, “He will not leave you;” He said, “Unto you alone He cometh, as also did I;” He said, “He remaineth in you;” but not even so did He drive out their despondency. For they still sought Him and His society. To cure, then, this feeling, He saith,

I will not leave you orphans [E. V., comfortless^u], I will come unto you.

“Fear not,” He saith, “I said not that I would send you another Comforter, as though I were Myself withdrawing from you for ever; I said not that He remaineth with you, as though I should see you no more. For I also myself will come to you; I will not leave you orphans.” When commencing He said, “Little children^v;” therefore He saith also here, *I will not leave you orphans.*

But since the words, *I will come unto you*, were those of one declaring a “presence,” observe how, in order that the disciples might not again seek for the same

^t “The Holy Spirit kindles in every one, in whom He dwells, the desire of things invisible; and, since worldly minds love only things visible, this world receiveth Him not.”—St. Hilary.

“The world, i.e. the lovers of the world, cannot receive the Holy Spirit because it seeth Him not. The love of this world hath not invisible eyes wherewith to see that which can only be seen invisibly.”—St. Augustine.

^u Greek, “Orphanous.”

^v St. John xiii. 33.

kind of presence as before, Christ did not clearly tell them this thing, but hinted at it; for having said,

Yet a little while, and the world seeth Me not; He added, but ye see Me.

As though He had said, "I, indeed, come unto you, but not in the same way as before, being over with you day by day." And lest they should say, "How, then, saidst Thou to the Jews, 'Henceforth ye shall not see Me?'" He solveth the contradiction by saying, "to you alone;" for such also is the nature of the Spirit.

Because I live, ye shall live also.

For the Cross doth not finally separate us, but only hideth for a little moment; and by life He seemeth to me to mean not the present life only, but the future also.

At that day ye shall know that I am in My Father, and you in Me, and I in you.

With regard to the Father, these words refer to essence; with regard to the disciples, to agreement of mind and help from God. Great and altogether boundless is the interval between Christ and the disciples. And if the same words are employed, marvel not; for the Scripture is wont often to use in different senses the same words, when applied to God and to men. Thus we are called "gods," and "sons of God," yet the word hath not the same force when applied to us and to God. And the Son is called "Image," and "Glory;" so are we, but great is the interval between us. Again, "ye are Christ's, and Christ is God's*;" but not in like manner as Christ is God's are we Christ's. But what is it that He saith here? "When I am risen," He saith, "ye shall know that I am not separated from the Father, but have the same power with Him, and that I am with you continually, when facts proclaim the aid which cometh to you from Me, when your enemies are kept down, and you speak boldly, when dangers are removed from your path, when the preaching of the Gospel flourisheth day by

* 1 Cor. iii. 23.

day, when all yield and give ground to the word of true religion ⁷.”

He that hath My commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth Me.

He that hath them in mind, and keepeth them in life; he that hath them in words, and keepeth them in works; he that hath them by hearing, and keepeth them by doing; he that hath them by doing, and keepeth them by persevering, *he it is that loveth Me.* Love must be shewn by works, or it is a mere barren name ².

And he that loveth Me shall be loved of My Father, and I will love him, and will manifest Myself to him. Judas saith unto Him, (not Iscariot,) Lord, how is it that Thou wilt manifest Thyself unto us, and not unto the world? Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love Me, he will keep My words, and My Father will love him, and We will come unto him, and make Our abode with him. He that loveth Me not keepeth not My sayings.

Lo, the cause is expounded, why He will manifest Himself to His own, not to aliens, whom He calleth by the name of “the world;” and the cause is this, because those love, these love not. The disciple questioned the Master concerning His manifestation of Himself, and he heard concerning loving and abiding. There is, then, a certain inner manifestation, which the ungodly know not at all, seeing to them there is no manifestation of God the Father, and the Holy Ghost: of the Son there could be, but in flesh; which neither is such as that other is, neither can be always present to them, of whatever kind it be, but only for *a little while*; and this for judgment, not for joy: for punishment, not for reward.

And lest any should imagine that the Father and the Son, without the Holy Spirit, make Their abode with them that love Him, let him recollect what was

⁷ St. Chrysostom.

² St. Augustine, in Cat. Aur.

said above concerning the Holy Spirit; *Whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth Him not, neither knoweth Him: but ye know Him; for He dwelleth with you, and shall be in you.* Behold, in the saints, together with Father and Son, maketh the Holy Spirit also His abode: within, as God in His Temple. God the Trinity,—Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, come to us, while we come to Them. They come by succouring, we by obeying; They by enlightening, we by seeing; They by filling, we by receiving: so that They are present to us, not by outward sight, but by internal vision; and present in us not for a transitory visit, but by an eternal abiding. So not unto the world manifesteth the Son Himself, for the world is meant of them of whom He saith, *He that loveth Me not keepeth not My sayings: and the word which ye hear is not Mine, but the Father's Which sent Me*^a.

So that he that heareth not these sayings, not only doth not love Me, but neither doth he love the Father. "For if this is the sure proof of love, the hearing the commandments, and these are of the Father, he that heareth them, loveth not the Son only, but the Father also^b."

Whereas He saith, *The word which ye hear is not Mine, but the Father's which sent Me*; let us not marvel, let us not be dismayed. He is not less than the Father, but He is only of the Father. He is not unequal with Him, but His Being is not of Himself.

Doth He then contradict Himself, having said, *He that loveth Me not keepeth not My words*, (Lo! He calleth them *His words*); and saying now, *And the word which ye have heard is not Mine?* It may be for the sake of some distinction, that where He called the words His, He said it in the plural, *words*; but where He said that the *Word* is not His but the Father's, there He meant it of Himself. "For in the beginning

^a St. Augustine.

^b St. Chrysostom.

was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God^c." And clearly He is not His own, but the Father's Word, as neither is He His own Son, but the Father's. Rightly, therefore, assigns He whatever He the Equal doeth, to the Author of Whom He hath this very attribute, to be without difference equal to Him^d.

These things have I spoken unto you, being yet present with you. But the Comforter, Which is the Holy Ghost, Whom the Father will send in My Name, He shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.

"Perhaps these things are not clear to you now, but *He* is a clear Teacher of them." And the saying that He should abide, being the expression of One implying that He Himself would depart, Christ, that they may not be grieved, saith that as long as He should remain with them and the Spirit should not come, they would be unable to comprehend anything great or sublime. And this He said to prepare them to bear nobly His departure, as that which was to be the cause of great blessings to them. He continually calleth Him *Comforter*, because of the afflictions which then possessed them. And since even after hearing these things they were troubled, when they thought of the sorrows, the wars, His departure, see how He calmeth them again by saying,

Peace I leave with you, My peace I give unto you.

All but saying, "What are ye harmed by the trouble of the world, provided ye be at peace with Me^e?"

Peace, saith He, *I leave with you, My peace I give unto you.* This it is that we read in the Prophet, "Peace upon peace^f;" peace He leaves us at His going, His peace He will give us in the end at His coming. Peace He leaves us in this world, His peace He will give us in the world to come. Peace He leaves us, in which by abiding therein, we overcome the enemy;

^c St. John i. 1.

^d St. Augustine.

^e St. Chrysostom.

^f Isa. lvii. 19, LXX.

His peace He will give us when we shall reign without an enemy. Peace He leaves us, that even here we may love one another; His peace He will give us, where it shall never more be possible for us to disagree. Peace He gives us, that we may not concerning our hidden things judge one another, while we are in this world; His peace He will give us, when "He shall make manifest the thoughts of the heart, and then shall every man have praise of God^s." Yet in Him and from Him have we our peace, whether that which He leaves us at His going to the Father, or that which He will give us at His bringing us to the Father. Now what does He leave us at His ascending from us, but Himself, while He quitteth us not? "For He is our Peace, who hath made both one^b." Himself, then, is our Peace, both when we believe that He is, and when we see Him as He is. For if, so long as we are in the corruptible body, that weigheth down the soul¹, while "we walk by faith not by sight^k," He forsaketh not His that be far away from Him in a strange land; how much more when we shall come to the sight, shall He fill us from Himself!

The Lord goes on to say, *Not as the world giveth, give I unto you.* Not as men give who love the world so give I unto you. Who give peace one to another, only that without molestation of strifes and wars they may enjoy, not God, but their friend the world; and when they give peace to the righteous, that cannot be a true peace where is not true concord, because their hearts are disunited^l.

Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid. Ye have heard how I said unto you, I go away, and come again unto you. If ye loved Me ye would rejoice, because I said, I go unto the Father: for My Father is greater than I^m.

^s 1 Cor. iv. 5.

^b Eph. ii. 14.

¹ Wisd. ix. 15.

^k 2 Cor. v. 6, 7.

^l St. Augustine.

^m The Son says not, "My Father is better than I," lest we should conceive Him to be foreign to His Nature; but greater, not, indeed.

And what joy would this bring them? What consolation? What, then, mean the words? They did not yet know concerning the Resurrection, nor had they a right opinion concerning Him, (for how could they, who did not even know that He would rise again?) but they thought that the Father was mighty. Therefore He saith, "If ye are fearful for Me, and if ye are not confident that I shall see you again after the Crucifixion, yet when ye heard that I go to the Father, ye ought to have rejoiced because I go away to One that is greater, and able to do away with all dangersⁿ."

But whom the Man was quitting, the God was not forsaking; and one selfsame Christ is Man and God. Therefore He was both going, in that He was man, and remaining, in that He was God: going, in that He was in one place; remaining, in that He was everywhere. Why, then, should the heart be troubled and be afraid, when, in quitting their eyes, He quitted not their heart?

That they might understand it to be as man that He had said, *I go, and come again to you*; He further said, *If ye loved Me, ye would rejoice, because I go to My Father: for My Father is greater than I*. It was therefore in regard that the Son is not equal to the Father^o, that He was about to go to the Father, from Whom He shall come to judge the quick and the dead; while in regard that the Only-begotten is equal to Him that begat, He never quitteth the Father, but is with Him everywhere by equal Godhead, Which no place containeth. In regard, then, of the form of a servant which He assumed, He saith, *The Father is greater than I*; but in regard of the form of God which He forsook not, He saith, "I and the Father are One."

in greatness, nor in time, but because of His generation from the Father Himself; nay, in saying *greater*, He shews that He is proper to His substance."—St. Athanasius against Arianism, I. xiii. 6.

ⁿ St. Chrysostom.

^o "Equal to the Father, as touching His Godhead; inferior to the Father, as touching His Manhood."—Athanasian Creed.

In this form of a servant, the Son of God is inferior not to the Father only, but to the Holy Ghost; in this the Child Christ was inferior even to His parents, to whom, we read, He was subject. Let us acknowledge, then, the twofold substance of Christ,—the Divine, which is equal to the Father, and the human, which is inferior. But Christ is both together; not two, but one Christ, else the Godhead is a quaternity, not a Trinity. For as the rational soul and flesh is one man, so God and Man is one Christ; and therefore Christ is God, rational soul and flesh.

He saith then, *If ye loved Me, ye would rejoice, because I said, I go to the Father*; for human nature should exult at being thus taken up by the Only-begotten Word, and made immortal in heaven, and dust sitting incorruptible at the Right Hand of the Father. Who, that loves Christ, will not rejoice at this, seeing, as he doth, his own nature immortal in Christ, and hoping that he himself will be so by Christ.

And now I have told you before it came to pass, that when it is come to pass, ye might believe.

He means surely by *when it is come to pass*, that they should see Him after His death, living and ascending to the Father; which, having seen, they should believe that He was Christ, the Son of the Living God, Who had power to do this when He had foretold it, and to foretell it before He did it: and believe this, not by a new, but by an increased faith; or at least by a faith which, though when He died it failed, was repaired when He rose again².

Hereafter I will not talk much with you: for the ruler [E. V. prince] of this world cometh, and hath nothing in Me.

By ruler of this world He meaneth the devil, calling wicked men the world. For he ruleth not heaven and earth, since he would fain have them subverted, and would cast down all things, but he ruleth over those who give themselves up to him. Wherefore Christ

² St. Augustine.

calleth him, "The ruler of the darkness of this world," in this place again calling evil deeds "darkness." What, then, doth the devil slay Thee? By no means; he *hath nothing in Me*. "How, then, do they kill Thee?" Because I will it, and

That the world may know that I love the Father; and as the Father gave Me commandment, even so I do.

"For being not subject," He saith, "to death, nor a debtor to it, I endure it through My love to the Father." This He saith, that He may again rouse their souls, and that they may learn that not unwillingly but willingly He goeth to death, and that He doth it despising the devil. So that they might consider that the action could not be destructive nor hurtful, if He Who greatly loved Him, and was greatly loved by Him, so willed.

He continually handleth the painful subject of His departure, with the object of practising their minds, and leading them to acquiescence by weaving in with it pleasant things. Thus He promises to return; He holds out the hope that they shall follow Him hereafter, He shews that He suffers not under constraint, but from love for the Father. Again, He speaks by anticipation ten thousand things concerning the Spirit. That It is in them, while the world cannot receive It, that He shall bring all things to their remembrance. He calls It the "Spirit of Truth," "Holy Spirit," "The Comforter," and saith that "It is expedient" for them that He should leave them, shewing that the coming of the Holy Spirit would make them spiritual.

And this was what took place. For they who before feared and were troubled, after they had received the Spirit, sprang into the midst of dangers, and stripped themselves for the contest against steel, and fire, and wild beasts, and every kind of suffering and peril; and they, the unlettered and ignorant, discoursed so boldly as to astonish their hearers. For the Spirit made them men of iron, instead of men of clay, gave them wings,

and allowed them to be cast down by nothing human. For such is the grace of the Spirit, if it find dependency, it disperses it; if evil desires, it consumes them; if cowardice, it casts it out, and doth not allow one who hath partaken of it to be afterwards mere man, but, as it were, removing him to heaven itself, causes him to image to himself all that is there. On this account no one said that any of the things that he possessed was his own^a, but they continued in prayer, in praise, and in singleness of heart. For this the Holy Spirit most requireth, for "the fruit of the Spirit is joy, peace, faith, meekness^r." And yet spiritual persons often grieve, saith some one. But that sorrow is sweeter than joy. Cain was sorrowful, but with the sorrow of the world; Paul was sorrowful, but with godly sorrow. Every thing that is spiritual brings the greatest gain, just as everything that is worldly brings the utmost loss. Let us, then, draw to us the invincible aid of the Spirit, by keeping the Commandments, and then we shall be nothing inferior to the angels. For not because they are incorporeal, are they of this character^s, for were this the case, no incorporeal being would have become wicked, but in every case the will is the cause of obedience or of disobedience. Wherefore among incorporeal beings some have been found worse than men or things irrational, and among beings having bodies, some better than the incorporeal. All just men, for instance, whatever were their righteous deeds, did them while dwelling on earth, and having bodies. For they dwelt on earth as those who were pilgrims and strangers; but in heaven, as citizens. Then say not thou either, "I am clothed with the flesh, I cannot get the mastery, nor undertake the toils which are for the sake of virtue." Do not accuse the Creator. For if the wearing of the flesh makes virtue

^a Acts iv. 32, and ii. 46.

^r Gal. v. 22, 23.

^s i.e. keeping God's commandments.

impossible, then the fault is not ours. But that it does not make it impossible, the band of saints has shewn. A nature of flesh did not prevent Paul from becoming what he was, nor Peter from receiving the keys of heaven; and Enoch also, having worn flesh, was translated, and not found. So also Elias was caught up with the flesh. Abraham also with Isaac and his grandson, shone brightly, having the flesh; and Joseph in the flesh struggled against that abandoned woman. But why speak I of the flesh? For though thou place a chain upon the flesh, no harm is done. Though I am bound, saith Paul, yet "the word of God is not bound^t." And why speak I of bonds and chains? Add to these the prison, and bars, yet neither are these any hindrances to virtue; at least, so Paul hath instructed us. For the bond of the soul is not iron, but cowardice, and the desire of wealth, and the ten thousand passions. These bind us, though our body be free. "But," saith some one, "these have their origin from the body." An excuse this, and a false pretence. For had they been produced from the body, all would have undergone them. For as we cannot escape weariness, and sleep, and hunger, and thirst, since they belong to our nature; so, too, these, if they were of the same kind, would not allow any one to be exempt from their tyranny; but since many escape them, it is clear that such things are the fault of a careless soul. Let us, then, put a stop to this, and not accuse the body, but subdue it to the soul, that having it under command, we may enjoy the everlasting good things through the grace and loving-kindness of our Lord Jesus Christ, to Whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen^u.

^t 2 Tim. ii. 9.^u St. Chrysostom.

MONDAY IN WHITSUN WEEK.

THE EPISTLE.

ACTS x. 34—43.

"Then Peter opened his mouth," &c.

*[For the first part of this Epistle see Monday in
Easter Week, pp. 444—447.]*

*While Peter yet spake these words, the Holy Ghost fell
on all them which heard the word.*

In the dispensation of God He did not allow Peter to finish his speech, and to *command* them to be baptized. But God anticipated him, and shewed that He knew their hearts; and the Holy Spirit came, and so provided an answer and defence for St. Peter against those who would charge him with surrendering the privileges of the Jews, and with a breach of the law of God by communion with the Gentiles^a.

And they of the circumcision, which believed, were astonished, as many as came with Peter, because that on the Gentiles also was poured out the gift of the Holy Ghost.

It is not simply that the Spirit had come upon the Gentiles, but also that they spake with tongues, which astonished those who had come together. They altogether disliked the whole matter, wherefore it is that the whole is of God; and as for Peter, it may almost be said that he is present only to be taught^b with them the lesson, that they must take the Gentiles in hand, and are themselves the persons who must do this. For whereas, even after all these great events, still,

^a St. Chrysostom (from the Bishop of Lincoln's Commentary).

^b Not meaning that Peter needed to be taught, but that—such is the dispensation for his exculpation: it is made to appear as if he needed the lesson, and was now taught it, and had his misapprehension rectified in common with them.

both in Cæsarea and in Jerusalem, a questioning is made about it, how would it have been if these tokens had not gone step by step with the progress of the affair? Therefore, there is a lavish array of Divine interpositions. Peter seizes his advantage, and see the plea he makes of this.

Then answered Peter, Can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptized, which have received the Holy Ghost as well as we^c?

He knew from the first that the Gentiles were to be admitted; as he said, "God hath shewn that I should not call any man common or unclean," and he plans his discourse beforehand with a view to it; he has been travailing to bring forth this. Gentiles? What Gentiles henceforth? They were no longer Gentiles, the Truth being come. *Can any one*, he asks, *forbid water?* It is the language, we may almost say, of one triumphantly pressing his advantage against such as would forbid, such as should say that this ought not to be^d. The whole thing, he would say, is complete. The most essential part of the business, the baptism with which we were baptized.

And he commanded them to be baptized in the Name of the Lord.

After he has cleared himself, then, and not before, he commands them to be baptized; teaching them by the facts themselves. Such was the dislike the Jews had to it! Therefore it is that he first clears himself, though the very facts cry aloud, and then gives the command.

^c St. Cyril argues that St. Peter judged Baptism to be the Sacrament of admission into Christ's Church; for otherwise he would not have commanded these to be baptized, who had received visibly and audibly the gift of the Holy Ghost.

^d Probably St. Peter would not have readily admitted them to Baptism, unless he had heard them prophesying, and had seen the Holy Ghost resting upon them. Therefore he asked: "Can any one *forbid* them *the water*, now that they have received the Holy Ghost as well as we?" thus persuading the Jews who were with him, and intimating that unless the Holy Spirit had rested upon them, there would have been some who would have forbidden them Baptism.—St. Irenæus.

Then prayed they him (well might they do so!) to tarry certain days: and henceforth, with a good courage, he does tarry.*

THE GOSPEL.

ST. JOHN iii. 16—21.

“God so loved the world that He gave,” &c.

God so loved the world that he gave His only-begotten Son. Each word has much significance; *God so loved the world.* Large and infinite was the distance between the two. He, the Immortal, Who is without beginning, the Infinite Majesty; those whom He loved but dust and ashes, full of innumerable sins, who, ungrateful, have at all times offended Him; and these He loved. Again, the words which He added after these are alike significant; when He saith that *He gave His only-begotten Son*, not a servant, not an Angel, not an Archangel.

Our Lord here sets forth His Passion, not openly, but rather darkly; but the advantage of the Passion He adds in a clearer manner, saying, *that every one that believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.* Having said before that the Son of man *must be lifted up*, and alluded to His Death, now, lest the hearer should be cast down by these words, forming mere human opinions concerning Him, and supposing that His Death was a ceasing to be, observe how He sets this right by saying that He that was given was *the Son of God*, and the Cause of Life, of everlasting Life. He Who by death procured life for others, would not Himself remain in death; for if they who believe on the Crucified perish not, much less doth He perish Who is crucified. He Who giveth Life to others, much more to Himself doth he well forth Life. Seest thou that everywhere there is need of faith? For He calls the

* St. Chrysostom, *in loc.*

Cross the Fountain of Life, which reason cannot easily allow, as the heathen by their mocking testify. But Faith, which goes beyond the weakness of reasoning, may easily receive and retain it.

For God sent not His Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world. Many of the more careless sort of persons, using the loving-kindness of God to increase the magnitude of their sins, and the excess of their disregard, speak in this way: "There is no hell; there is no future punishment; God forgives us all sins." To stop whose mouths a wise man says, "Say not His mercy is great. He will be pacified for the multitude of my sins; for mercy and wrath come from Him, and His indignation resteth upon sinners^f." And again: "As His mercy is great, so is His correction also^g." "Where, then," saith one, "is His loving-kindness, if we shall receive for our sins according to our deserts?" That we shall indeed receive according to our deserts, both the prophet and Paul declare. One says, "Thou shalt render unto every man according to his work^h;" the other, "Who will render to every man according to his workⁱ." And yet we may see that even so the loving-kindness of God is great, in dividing our existence into two periods—the present life, and that which is to come; and making the first to be an appointment of trial, and the second a place of crowning. In this he hath shewn great loving-kindness.

How, and in what way? Because when we had committed many and grievous sins, and had not ceased from youth to extreme old age to defile our souls with evil deeds, for none of these sins did He demand from us a reckoning, but granted us remission of them by the Washing of Regeneration, and freely gave us Righteousness and Sanctification. "What, then," saith one, "if a man who, from his earliest age, hath been deemed worthy of the Mysteries, after this commits innumer-

^f Ecclus. v. 6.

^h Ps. lxi. 12, LXX.

^g Ecclus. xvi. 12.

ⁱ Rom. ii. 6.

able sins?" Such an one deserves a severer punishment. For we do not pay the same penalties for the same sins, if we do wrong after initiation. And this Paul declares, saying, "He that despised Moses' law died without mercy under two or three witnesses; of how much sorer punishment suppose ye shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the Covenant an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of Grace." Such an one, then, is worthy of severer punishment. Yet even for him God hath opened doors of repentance, and hath granted him many means for the washing away his transgressions if he will. Think then what proofs of loving-kindness these are, by grace to remit sins, and not to punish him who after grace has sinned and deserves punishment, but to give him a season and appointed space for pleading his cause. For all these reasons Christ saith to Nicodemus, *God sent not His Son to condemn the world, but to save the world.*

For there are two advents of Christ,—that which has been, and that which is to be. And the two are not for the same purpose. The first came to pass, not that He might search into our actions, but that He might remit our sins. The object of the second will be, not to remit our sins, but to enquire into our actions. Therefore of the first He saith, *I came not to condemn the world but to save the world.* But of the second, when the Son shall have come in the glory of His Father, He shall set the sheep on His right hand, and the goats on His left. And they shall go, those into life, and these into eternal punishment. Yet His former coming was for judgment, according to the rule of justice. Why? Because before His coming there was a law of nature and the Prophets, and moreover a written law, and doctrine, and numberless promises, and manifestations of signs, and chastisements, and vengeance, and many other things which might have set men right. And it followed

that for all these things He might [by the rule of justice] have demanded an account. But because He is merciful, He for a while pardons instead of making any enquiry. For had He done this, all would at once have been hurried to perdition. "For all," It saith, "have sinned, and come short of the glory of God." Seest thou the unspeakable excess of His loving-kindness?

He that believeth on the Son is not judged, but he that believeth not is judged already.

Yet if He came not to judge the world, how is *he that believeth not judged already*, if the time of "judgment" has not yet arrived? He either means that the very fact of continuing in disbelief is a punishment, (for to be without the light, contains in itself a very severe punishment,) or He announces beforehand what shall be. For as the murderer, though he be not as yet condemned by the decision of the judge, is still condemned by the nature of the thing, so is it with the unbeliever. Thus Adam died on the same day that he eat of the tree; for so ran the decree: "In the day that ye eat of the tree ye shall die;" yet he lived. How, then, did he? By the decree; by the very nature of the thing; for he who has rendered himself liable to punishment is under its penalty; and if for a while not actually so, yet he is so by the sentence.

He that believeth on the Son is not judged. He that believeth, not he that is over curious; he that believeth, not the busybody. But what if his life be unclean, and his deeds evil? It is of such as these especially that Paul declares that they are not true believers at all: "They profess that they know God, but in works they deny Him^k."

And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light.

^k Titus i. 16.

That is, "They are punished because they would not leave the darkness, and hasten to the light." And hence he goes on to deprive them of all excuse for the future: "Had I come," saith He, "to punish and exact account of their deeds, they might have been able to say, 'This is why we started away from Thee;' but now I am come to free them from darkness, and to bring them to the light; who, then, could pity one who will not come from darkness unto light? When they have no charge to bring against us, but have received benefits without number, then they start away from us." And this charge He hath brought against them in another place, where He saith, "They hated Me without a cause;" and again, "If I had not come and spoken unto them, they had not had sin." For he who in the absence of light sitteth in darkness, may perchance receive pardon; but one who, after light is come, abides in the darkness, produces against himself a certain proof of a perverse and contentious disposition. Next, because his assertion would seem incredible to most, (for none would prefer darkness to light,) he adds the cause of such a feeling in them:—

Because, He saith, their deeds were evil. For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved.

Yet He came not to judge or to enquire, but to pardon and remit transgressions, and to grant salvation through faith. Why, then, fled they? Had He come and sat in His own Judgment-seat, it might have seemed reasonable; for he that is conscious to himself of evil deeds, is wont to fly his judge. But on the contrary, to one who is pardoning, they who have transgressed do even run. If, therefore, He came to pardon, those would naturally most hasten to Him who were conscious to themselves of many transgressions. Indeed, this was the case, for even publicans and sinners sat at meat with Jesus. What, then, is

this which He saith? He saith this of those who choose to continue in wickedness. He indeed came that He might forgive men's former sins, and secure them against future sins; but since there are some so relaxed, so powerless for the toils of virtue, that they desire to abide in wickedness to their latest breath, and never to cease from it, He speaks in this place, pointing His rebuke at these. "For since," He saith, "the profession of Christianity requires besides right doctrine, a sound conversation also, they fear to come over to us because they like not to shew forth a righteous life. None would blame him that lives in heathenism, because with gods such as he has, and with rites as foul and ridiculous as his gods, he shews forth actions that suit his doctrines; but those who belong to the true God, if they live a careless life, are called to account and accused by all men. So greatly is truth admired even by its enemies." Observe, then, with what exactness He speaketh. His expression is, not, "He that hath done evil cometh not to the light," but, "he that doeth it always, that desireth always to roll himself in the mire of sin, he will not subject himself to my laws, but chooses to stay without, and to commit fornication without fear, and do all other forbidden things. For if he comes to Me, he becomes manifest as a thief in the light, and therefore he avoids My dominion." For instance, even now one may hear many heathen say, that they cannot come to our faith because they cannot leave off drunkenness and fornication, and the like disorders¹.

But he that doeth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest that they are wrought in God.

My brethren, in whom doth the Lord find good works? In none: in all He findeth evil works. In what sense, then, is it said that certain have done truth and are come to the light, i.e. to Christ? And in what sense are we to understand, *This is the con-*

¹ St. Chrysostom.

demnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness more than light, because their deeds were evil? What is this? Why, whose works were good? Art thou not come to justify the ungodly? But, with Christ, they loved darkness rather than light. There hath He laid the stress. For some loved their sins, some confessed their sins. Now he that confesseth his sins, and condemneth his sins, worketh thenceforth with God. God condemneth thy sins; if thou condemnest them too, thou art joined with God.

The beginning of good works is the confession of evil works. Thou doest truth, and comest to the light. What meaneth, "thou doest truth?" Thou dost not fondle thyself, nor soothe, nor flatter thyself; thou dost not say, "I am just," when thou art unrighteous; and so beginnest to do truth. But thou comest to the light, that thy works may be made manifest that they are wrought in God. Because this very thing, namely, the displeasure thou hast at thy sin, thou wouldst not have at all, did not God shine upon thee, and His truth shew thee thy sin. But the man who, even being admonished, doth love his sins, he hateth the light which admonisheth him, and fleeth from it, that his evil works which he loveth may not be reprovèd. Whereas the man who doeth truth accuseth in himself his own evils, spareth not himself, forgiveth not himself, that God may forgive. Because what he would that God should overlook as if it were not there, he looketh it in the face, and owneth that it is there, and cometh to the light, to which he also giveth thanks, because it shewed him that which he should hate in himself. He saith to God, "Turn away Thy Face from my sins;" and with what assurance sayeth he it, unless he addeth, "For I acknowledge my wickedness, and my sin is ever before me." Let that be before thee which thou wouldest not should be before God. But if thou put thy sin behind thee, God doth force it back before thine eyes, and this at a time when there is no more any fruit of repentance.

Run ye that the darkness come not upon ye, my brethren. Wake up to your salvation, wake up while it is time; let none be retarded from the temple of God, none retarded from the work of the Lord, none called off from continual prayer, none self-defrauded of the customary devotion. Wake up, then, while it is day. The day shineth; Christ is the day; He is ready to forgive sins, but it is to them who acknowledge their sins; ready too to punish them who defend themselves, and boast that they are righteous, and think themselves to be something, when they are nothing. But he which walketh in His love and in His mercy, even while delivered from those deadly and huge sins, such as are the crimes of murder, theft, adultery; still, because of those which seem to be minute sins, of tongue, or thought, or want of moderation in things permitted, he *doeth truth* by confession, and cometh to the light in good works; seeing that many minute sins, if they be neglected, are fatal. Minute are the drops which make the rivers, minute the grains of sand, but if much sand be heaped up, it presseth and crusheth. The bilge-water allowed to accumulate in the ship's hold doth the same mischief; by little and little it leaks in through the hold, and by long leaking in, and no pumping out, it sinks the ship. Now this pumping out, what is it but by good works to take care that sins overwhelm us not, by mourning, fasting, giving, forgiving? Truly the path of this life is troublous, full of temptation; in prosperity let it not lift us up, in adversity let it not break us. He Who gave thee felicity of this world, gave it for thy comfort, not for thy undoing; again, He Who scourgeth thee in this world, doth it for thine amending, not for thy condemnation. Thou must bear Him as a Father to train thee, lest thou feel Him as a Judge to punish thee^m.

^m St. Augustine.

TUESDAY IN WHITSUN WEEK.

THE EPISTLE.

Acts viii. 14—17.

"When the Apostles, which were at Jerusalem," &c.

When the Apostles, which were at Jerusalem, heard that Samaria had received the Word of God, they sent unto them Peter and John; who, when they were come down, prayed for them, that they might receive the Holy Ghost.

And yet great signs had been done; how, then, had they not received the Spirit? They had received the Spirit, namely, of remission of sins, but the Spirit of miracles they had not received. For as yet He was fallen on none of them; only they were baptized in the Name of the Lord Jesus. Then laid they their hands on them, and they received the Holy Ghost. For to shew that this was the case, and that it was the Spirit of miracles they had not received, observe how, having seen the result, Simon came and asked for this^a; "And when Simon saw that through laying on of the Apostles' hands the Holy Ghost was given, he offered them money, saying, Give me also this power, that on whomsoever I lay hands, he may receive the Holy Ghost^b."

Great, indeed, and all-powerful in gifts, and wonderful, is the Holy Ghost. Consider how many of you are now sitting here, how many souls of us are present.

^a Acts viii. 18, 19.

^b St. Chrysostom.

For each He is working as is suitable, and being in the midst He beholds the temper of each. He beholds, also, his thoughts and his conscience, and what we say, and what we imagine. What I have now said is great indeed, yet is it small. For consider, I pray, with thoughts illuminated by Him, how many Christians there are of this diocese, and how many in the whole province of Palestine, and carry forward thy mind from this province to the whole Roman empire; and after this, consider the whole world; races of Persians, and nations of Indians, Goths, and Sarmatians, Gauls and Spaniards, and Moors, Libyans, and Ethiopians, and the rest for whom we have no names; for of many of the nations not even the names have reached us. Consider, I pray, of each nation, Bishops, Priests, Deacons, Solitaries, Virgins, and other laity, and then behold the great Protector and Dispenser of their gifts;—how throughout the world He gives to one chastity, to another perpetual virginity, to another almsgiving, to another voluntary poverty, to another power of repelling hostile spirits. And as the light with one gleam sheds radiance on all things, so also the Holy Ghost enlightens those who have eyes; for if any from blindness is not vouchsafed His grace, let him not blame the Spirit, but his own unbelief.

Thou hast seen His power, which is throughout the world; tarry now no longer upon earth, but ascend on high. Ascend, I say, in imagination, even unto the first heaven, and behold how many uncounted myriads of Angels are there. Rise up in thy thoughts, if thou canst, yet higher; do but consider the Archangels, do but consider the Spirits; consider the Virtues, consider the Principalities, consider the Powers, consider the Thrones, consider the Dominions;—the Comforter is of all these the Ruler from God, and the Teacher, and the Sanctifier. Of Him has Elias need, and Elisseus, and Esaias, among men; of Him Michael and Gabriel have need among Angels; nought of

things created is equal in honour to Him. For the families of the Angels, and all their hosts assembled together, have no equality with the Holy Ghost. All these the all-excellent power of the Comforter overshadows. And they, indeed, are sent forth to minister; but He searches even the deep things of God, according as the Apostle says, "For the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God. For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God^c."

He preached concerning Christ in the Prophets, He wrought in the Apostles, He to this day seals the souls in Baptism. And the Father indeed gives to the Son, and the Son shares with the Holy Ghost; for it is Jesus Himself, not I, who says, "All things are delivered unto Me of My Father^d;" and of the Holy Ghost He says, "When He, the Spirit of truth, shall come," and the rest . . . "He shall glorify Me; for He shall receive of Mine, and shall shew it unto you^e." The Father through the Son, with the Holy Ghost, bestows all things; the gifts of the Father are none other than those of the Son, and those of the Holy Ghost; for there is one Salvation, one Power, one Faith; one God the Father; one Lord, His Only-begotten Son; one Holy Ghost, the Comforter. And it is enough for us to know these things; but enquire not curiously into His nature or substance; for had it been written, we would have spoken of it; what is not written, let us not venture on, for it is sufficient for our salvation to know that there is Father, and Son, and Holy Ghost^f.

^c 1 Cor. ii. 10, 11.

^e St. John xvi. 13, 14.

^d St. Matt. xi. 27.

^f St. Cyril, Lect. xvi.

THE GOSPEL.

ST. JOHN X. 1—10.

“Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that entereth,” &c.

Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that entereth not by the door into the sheep-fold, but climbeth up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber.

He that entereth in by the door is the shepherd of the sheep: to him the porter openeth; and the sheep hear his voice, and he calleth his own sheep by name, and leadeth them out. And, when he putteth forth his own sheep, he goeth before them, and the sheep follow him; for they know his voice. And a stranger will they not follow; but will flee from him; for they know not the voice of strangers.

Christ speaketh in these last words of Theudas and Judas, of whom it is written, that “all, as many as believed on them were scattered,” or of the false Christs, who after them should deceive. For, lest any should say that He was one of these, He in many ways distinguisheth Himself from them. And the first difference which He setteth down is His teaching from the Scriptures^s, for not from them did those others draw men after them. The second is the obedience of the sheep, for on Him they all believed, not only while he lived, but when He had died; those others they straightway left. With these we may mention a third, and no trifling difference; those did all things as rebels, and to cause revolts, but He placed Himself so far from such suspicion, that when men would have made Him a king, He fled, and when they asked, “Is it lawful to give tribute unto Cæsar?” He bade them pay it, and Himself gave the two-drachm

^s St. Chrysostom takes the “door,” in the first part of this lesson, to be the Holy Scriptures.

piece^b. Besides this, He came to save the sheep, *That they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly.* But the others deprived them even of this present life. They betrayed those that were entrusted to them, and fled, but He withstood so nobly as even to give up His life. They suffered unwillingly and by compulsion, and desiring to escape; He suffered willingly, and by choice.

This parable spake Jesus unto them: but they understood not what things they were which He spake unto them.

And wherefore spake He obscurely? Because He would make them the more attentive; when He had effected this He removes the obscurity^c.

Our Lord feedeth by plain words, exerciseth by obscure. For when two persons, one godly, the other ungodly, hear the words of the Gospel, and they happen to be such that neither can understand them, one says, What he saith is true and good, but we do not understand it; the other says, It is not worth attending to. The former, in faith knocks, yea, and if he continue to knock, it shall be opened unto him. The latter shall hear the words in Isaiah^d, "If ye will not believe, surely ye shall not be established^e."

Verily, verily, I say unto you, I am the door of the sheep.

Our Lord has acquainted us with two things which were obscure; first that He is the door, and afterwards that He is the Shepherd. "I am the good Shepherd^f." Above, He said that the shepherd entered by the door. If He is the door, how doth He enter by Himself? Just as He knows the Father by Himself, and we by Him, so He enters into the fold by Himself, and we by Him. We enter by the door, because we preach Christ: Christ preaches Himself. A light shews both

^b See St. Mark xii. 14, and St. Matt. xvii. 24—27.

^c St. Chrysostom.

^d St. Augustine in Cat.

^e Isa. vii. 9.

^f St. John x. 11.

other things, and itself too. And there is but one Shepherd; for though the rulers of the Church, those who are her sons and not hirelings, are shepherds, they are all members of that one Shepherd; His office of Shepherd He hath permitted His members to bear. Peter is a shepherd, and all the other Apostles; all good Bishops are shepherds. But none of us calleth himself *the door*^a.

All that ever came before Me are thieves and robbers; but the sheep did not hear them. I am the door; by Me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture.

All that ever came before Me are thieves and robbers; but the sheep did not hear them.

He doth not here speak of the prophets (as the heretics assert), for as many as believed on Christ did hear them also and were persuaded by them; but of Theudas and Judas, and the other excitors of sedition. Besides, He saith the sheep did not hear them, as praising the sheep, but nowhere is He heard to praise those who refused to hearken to the prophets, rather, on the contrary, to reproach and accuse such with vehemence; whence it is evident that the words, *did not hear them*, refer to those leaders of sedition.

The thief cometh not but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy.

Which took place then when all their followers were slain and perished^o.

Understand, *All that ever came before Me*, is all that ever came at variance with Me. The prophets were not at variance with Him; they came with Him, Who came with the Word of God, who spake the truth. He, the Word, the Truth, sent heralds before Him, but the hearts of those whom He sent were His own. They came with Him, inasmuch as He Is always, though He assumed the flesh in time; "In the be-

^a St. Augustine in Cat. Aur.

^o St. Chrysostom.

ginning was the Word." His humble Advent in the flesh was preceded by just men, who believed on Him as about to come, as we believe on Him come. The times are different, the faith is the same. Our faith knitteth together both those who believed that He was about to come, and those who believe that He has come. All that ever came at variance with Him were thieves and robbers, i.e. they came to steal and to kill; *but the sheep did not hear them*, they had not Christ's voice, but were wanderers, dreamers, deceivers^p.

But I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly.

Methinks He meant, "that they may have life," when coming in, "and have it more abundantly," when going out. Now a man cannot go out by the Door, which is Christ, unto eternal life, which will be in the reality, unless by that very Door, i.e. by the same Christ, he have entered into His Church, which is His fold, unto temporal life, which is in faith. Accordingly He saith, *I am come that they may have life*, i.e. "faith which worketh by love^q," by which faith they enter into the fold, that they may live, "for the just doth live by faith^r;" *and may have it more abundantly*, who, by persevering unto the end, go out by that door, i.e. by the faith of Christ, seeing they die true believers; and shall have life more abundantly, by coming to that place whither that Shepherd is gone before, where they shall never thenceforth die. Albeit then, here also, in the fold itself, there lacks not pasture, since we may understand that which is said, "shall find pasture," of both, i.e. both at the coming in and at the going out; yet there shall they find true pasture where they shall be satisfied who hunger and thirst after righteousness; such pasture as he found, to whom it was said, "To-day thou shalt be with Me in Paradise^s."

^p St. Augustine in Cat. Aur.

^q Gal. v. 6.

^r Rom. i. 17.

^s Matt. v. 6; Luke xxiii. 49.

There are many, who, according to a certain common usage of this life, are called good people, good men, good women, harmless; and, so to say, observing the duties enjoined in the Law, honouring their parents, not committing adultery, doing no murder, not stealing, not bearing false witness against any, and in a sort, observing the other duties commanded in the Law; and yet are not Christians. And these commonly give themselves airs, like the Pharisees, saying, "Are we blind also?" But because in all these things that they do, while they know not to what end they refer them, they do them to no purpose; the Lord hath propounded in the Lesson of to-day a similitude concerning His flock and the Door by which is the entering into the sheepfold. Then let the Pagans say, We lead good lives. If they enter not by the Door, what profiteth them that whereof they glory? To each individual who leads a good life, the profit of it ought to be this, that it should be given him to live for ever; if it be not given a man to live for ever, what doth his good life profit him? Because they cannot be said even to live well, who, either through blindness know not, or through inflation of mind despise, that which is the end of good living. Now no man has a true and sure hope of living for ever, unless he acknowledge the Life, which is Christ, and enter by the door into the sheepfold.

Now it is the aim, generally, of such persons to persuade other men to lead good lives, and yet not to be Christians. They wish to climb over by another side, to plunder and to kill; not as the Shepherd, to preserve and to save. So there have been certain philosophers, holding much fine-spun discourse, of virtues and vices; dividing, defining, reasoning out most acute conclusions, filling whole books, loud-mouthed in the parade of their own wisdom; who even dared to say to men, Follow us, hold our sect if ye would live happily. But they entered not by

the door; what they wished was, to undo men, to slaughter, and to kill.

What should I say of them? So, the Pharisees themselves read, and in that which they read sounded the name of Christ, hoped for Christ to come, and when He was come, acknowledged Him not. They, too, boasted that they were among the seeing, that is, the wise; and denied Christ, and entered not by the door. Therefore, they too, if haply they did draw any after them, it was to slaughter and kill, not to deliver, that they would draw them. Let us leave these also; let us look to those, whether haply they enter in by the door, who glory in the name of Christ Himself.

For these are innumerable, who not only boast that they see, but wish to be thought to have been enlightened by Christ, but they are heretics. Haply they entered by the door? God forbid we should say so! What need to run through many names, and enumerate the many varieties of heresies? Hold yet this, that Christ's fold is the Catholic Church; whoso would enter into the fold, let him enter in by the door, let him preach very Christ. Not only preach very Christ, but seek Christ's glory, not his own; for many, by seeking their own glory, have rather scattered Christ's sheep than gathered them. For the door is lowly, even Christ the Lord; he that enters in by this door must needs stoop, and humble himself, that he may be able to enter in with a whole head. But he that does not humble, but extols himself, will needs climb over the wall; now he that climbs over the wall, is exalted only to fall¹.

¹ St. Augustine.



